

# A VERY RECENT VIEW OF TURKEY

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A HANDY BOOK  
ON THE  
EASTERN QUESTION

BEING  
A VERY ~~RECENT~~ VIEW OF TURKEY

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*WITH A MAP*

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## P R E F A C E.

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I THOUGHT that I could not better employ my autumn than in trying to gain some knowledge of the Turkish question. I have no pretension to any special knowledge of the complications of European politics; quite the contrary. But administration is my trade—I have had a very long practice in dealing with Mahommedans and other Eastern peoples, and a large experience of Eastern politics—it occurred to me that perhaps my professional knowledge might enable me to bring to this Turkish question some lights different from those of politicians whose experience has been more exclusively Western, and that so I might possibly contribute my mite towards the solution of the difficulties which now perplex so many wiser heads. In this view I started on my tour—a sort of political tour I may call it. Just as a British manufacturer goes to the Ame-

rican Exhibition, prepared to bring his trade knowledge to bear on what he sees there, so I went in the other direction to the scene of the political events now passing.

To gather together anything I might pick up I had two courses open—either to write from day to day what I saw and heard in the form of a journal—or merely to make brief memoranda, to weigh one evidence against another, to sift it all in my own mind, and to bring into comparatively brief compass the results at which I might arrive. I found that the former course would be too tedious at a time when events were marching so rapidly. If I were to record all that I heard on both sides of every question, there would be no end to the books that might be written. And this course might have involved more allusions to individuals and their opinions than might be convenient. I have therefore taken the other course, have to a certain extent set myself up as a sort of judge, have sifted diligently all the evidence I could get, and come to the best conclusions I could. I violate no confidences, for I invited none. I have gone about as a traveller and member of the British Parliament making political inquiries. I have spoken frankly and freely, not concealing any views to which I inclined, and seeking to test them by the opinions of others; and all that I have

gathered in such conversations I have marked and inwardly digested. Professing, however, as I do to give merely the general outcome of what I saw and heard, no one but myself is responsible for my statements. I give the results of my inquiries for what they are worth—they can be estimated only with regard to any small qualifications for dealing with these things which I may be deemed to have.

Perhaps it will be thought that my opinions are stated somewhat broadly and decidedly, but I trust it will be understood that this is only the result of my long official habit, administrative and judicial. I have spent my life sifting cases of all sorts and deciding upon them, and I give my opinions on the Turkish case just as, to return to the illustration I have already used, the manufacturer gives his opinions on the American goods. Constantly to repeat the periphrases of humility and diffidence is a tedious process, so I hope the assurance will be accepted once for all that I do not dogmatize, but only set out the verdict which I should give upon the evidence. I have no doubt often failed to get at the whole truth. If in some things I may seem to have obtained some light I shall have done my part.

I have to thank many men for much kindness and long-suffering in giving me information and submitting to a very exhaustive cross-questioning. If

my proceedings may have sometimes seemed inquisitorial, I must pray forgiveness; my only excuse is my zeal in the prosecution of my trade. I dare say that when a *pin-maker* gets on the subject of pins he goes pretty deep into it. As I take the responsibility of everything, relying upon the evidence as a whole and not on authority, I name no names, and the sincere thanks I here render for information must be general.

It was not my intention to inquire into the Bulgarian atrocities. I thought others were doing that sufficiently, and I rather desired to see the people of Turkey in their villages and in as normal a state as possible, so as to form the best opinions I could as to the kind of local government that might be devised; for I thought that Lord Derby's proposals on that subject contained the key to the solution of the question. I was, however, very glad that, being in the country which was the scene of the atrocities, I took the opportunity to visit some places which might be taken as fair specimens of the destruction wrought in May last, for till one has seen that I hardly think one wholly realises the character of those events.

I should much have preferred to supplement the impressions which I gathered on the spot by a good deal of historical and other reading, previous to coming before

the public; but events are marching very rapidly,—a decision must soon be arrived at—any contribution to a solution of the question must come now or it will be too late; so I have thought it better to give what I can in a rapid way rather than wait. My impressions are, at any rate, fresh and genuine. I only returned from Turkey last week, and I have lost no time in sending these pages to the printer—the circumstances must be my excuse for many shortcomings.

I was anxious to get up a little map to show the distribution of races. It is impossible in the time to do so completely. I can only use an existing map, for the geography and the nomenclature of which I am not responsible; but I have been promised a section of that map coloured, according to my direction, from the best Continental maps, to show roughly the distribution of the principal Christian races in European Turkey. The Mahommedans are so scattered and intermixed throughout the country that I found it impossible to give them without going into greater minutiae than is practicable in the time and on so small a scale; so I beg it may be understood that I have not taken on myself to expel the Turks from Europe before their time, but have only relegated them to the letter-press and given in the map the areas

in which the Christian races are found. The Albanians appear among these, though half of them are Mahomedans, but I had not the means of distinguishing the parts of Albania in which Christians are not found.

I do not claim for the race-map any exact accuracy. It is impossible properly to represent the intermixture of races. I can only in a few cases represent minorities by spots. Roughly, however, I believe that the colours do represent with a near approach to truth those parts in which one or other of the Christian races is in a decided majority, as among Christians. It will be remembered that most of those districts are also more or less shared with the unrepresented Turk population. In some of the Eastern districts Mahomedans are in as great strength as the Christians. I have excluded the Christians altogether from the Tartar district to the north-east and left that uncoloured.

I would much rather have avoided political criticism of the conduct of our own Government and ambassador, and only touch on this so far as I deem it necessary, on the principle of the Judge who sentenced the man to be hanged, not for stealing a horse but that horses might not be stolen. I have no wish to condemn the past; but I do think it is most vitally necessary that at this crisis, when the peace of Europe hangs in the balance, we should try to understand what the errors are,

a persistence in which may lead to fatal results. For my part, if the Government had stuck to the proposals which they themselves made in September, I should not have said a word against them. It is their wavering, and in practice dropping those proposals for a time, which has, I fear, done incalculable mischief. And the only lesson I desire to draw from the past is, that, having revived those proposals, they must now show that they are really in earnest and will go through with them.

Personally too, Sir Henry Elliot is the last man I should desire to attack. A Scotchman of a liberal stock; an amiable and accomplished gentleman—I am sure one could say nothing but good of him in any other capacity than British Ambassador at Constantinople. But there, I believe that the Turks have been terribly misled by the position which he has assumed. While the Government at home has wavered, he, I apprehend, has personally held without wavering to old pro-Turkish and anti-Russian opinions, even when he has been loyally carrying out the orders of his Government. I think that those opinions have, with other influences, given a certain tone to a large section of English society at Constantinople, which has greatly encouraged the Turks; and I much fear that, so long as they think Sir Henry Elliot can be supposed to have any voice whatever in determining the British policy,

they will be very slow to yield to unpalatable demands. I am convinced that the whole question, whether Europe is to have peace or be plunged into war, mainly depends, not so much on the ostensible attitude of England as on the Turkish belief respecting the course which England is likely to take in the last extremity. If they can flatter themselves with the hope that a Russian invasion will bring England to back them, they will resist, and there will be an invasion and a bloody war, whoever may take part in it. I am anxious to do my little possible towards pointing out what seem to me the errors of navigation that have led the ship into dangerous courses and may wreck her, if they are again followed.

Under ordinary circumstances I should have thought it more proper to express my views, on the political subjects which have engaged my attention, to my constituents. But when one begins to speak in public one cannot be quite sure of one's words, and it is because I desire to be very careful and moderate, and to state only that which I have fully thought over, that I have deemed it better first to put in writing what I have to say.

What the result of the present crisis may be, I do not pretend to prophesy, but I hope there are some favourable symptoms. Straws appear to be thrown out by either side. While the demands of the Russians are ap-



parently such as not to preclude the hope of settlement, I have noticed, the last day or two, statements of the things that the Turks will never agree to, which seem to imply that they may possibly agree to the rest. The things they are said to declare impossible are, a foreign occupation of Bulgaria; a general disarmament of the Mahomedan population; and the deportation of the Circassians. Now these are just the points which, in the sheets which have gone to press, I have put as those which need not be pressed to the utmost. On the whole, it looks as if the British Government might still clinch the matter. If we settle a plan and then say to Turkey, 'If you refuse it we will not only withdraw our support and leave you to meet the Russians as you best can, but we will forthwith join in coercing you from the side of the sea—at Constantinople in fact'—then I should hope the thing may be done without serious bloodshed.

I had sent to press the remarks I have hazarded on the position of the Greeks before I read Mr. Gladstone's paper on that subject which appears to-day. I had not myself seen that element of justice on the Greek side of the quarrel with the Bulgarians which Mr. Gladstone seems inclined to admit. I am no ecclesiastical politician, and could form no opinion on the question whether a division of churches should be personal or

territorial, but I must say I believe that, in any territorial partition, the Greeks would not have been satisfied without obtaining, for their share, a country south of the Balkan which is quite Bulgarian—which is in fact the very heart of the Bulgarian region.

As respects the holding back of the Greeks, when the Slavs were struggling for freedom, there is this to be said, that they are in a much more exposed position than the Servians. The Greek towns are on or near the sea, and with the ironclad fleet and a strong army the Turks might have destroyed the whole of them. On the other hand, it is, I think, quite a selfish feeling which leads many of the local Greeks to favour Midhat Pasha's constitution in preference to the plan of local government. Under the local arrangement the Bulgarians would get the larger share, whereas in a Turkish Parliament at Constantinople the Greeks might take an important part and the Bulgarians very little part. It might be better for the Greeks to accept that *rôle* and to wait to succeed the Turks in the chief place, rather than to let the inheritance be divided now. It seems, however, by the last account, that the Turkish Ministers themselves cannot agree about their free constitution, and that it is not certain whether it will come off.

G. C.

DECEMBER 1, 1876.

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# A VERY RECENT VIEW OF TURKEY.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE COUNTRY AND THE RACES THAT INHABIT IT.

EUROPEAN TURKEY does not at first strike a traveller as a very rich country, and it is certainly neither very highly cultivated nor very fully peopled. The parts most accessible—those on the line of railway from Constantinople to Adrianople, and again on the north-east from Varna to Rustchuk—are poor-looking, especially in the autumn. There is a want of the green grass to which we are accustomed in England; and it is not till, going beyond Adrianople, one gets into the country of the Bulgarians, that one sees far-stretching and good cultivation. Even there the fields are so large and fallows so common as to show rather an abundance of land than the utmost use of it. Close to Constantinople itself many of the views over the hills and undulations are most desolate. It is only

when one looks close into the small valleys and cultivated portions of the hills, where Greek industry has established a charming cultivation, that one discovers that the soil is really exceedingly rich—after a French rather than an English fashion—and that only population and cultivation are wanting. So again in the Bulgarian country, when one comes to the villages on the lower slopes of the hills, one finds great vineyards and mulberry gardens, and other high cultivation, on a much larger scale, and with greater apparent wealth of soil than in most of the vine-growing districts of France. There can, I think, be no question that the country is really exceedingly rich, but rich rather in the way that gives great returns to industry, than like the virgin plains which give excessive returns to little labour.

In truth, no country in Europe is so little known, and I do not pretend to have acquired knowledge sufficient to describe it; but, at any rate, it is evident that most of it is hilly, and that the slopes of the hills and valleys are very productive. The word *Balkan* means in Turkish ‘mountain,’ and is applied to any range, not only to that which we call the ‘Balkans.’ The crest of this latter range (properly the Hæmus Mountains, I believe) is not crossed in the route from Constantinople to Nissa and Servia; it rather runs from the east side of Servia south-east to the north of Sofia, and thence nearly from west to east, and



roughly parallel to the Danube, to the Black Sea, a little south of Varna. So far as I can make out, there is not a large population in the higher parts of this range, but beneath it, north and south, are the finest parts of Turkey—the head-quarters of the Bulgarian race, and very well cultivated by them. I understand that to the north, in the valleys running down to the Danube, all the way from Widdin to Rustchuk, there is a populous and comparatively prosperous country; and I can testify to the fineness of the country to the south, about Phillipopolis and Tatar Bazardjik, the scenes of the late unhappy events. I was astonished to see the size and populousness of the places at the foot of the hills, there called villages, and the signs of prosperity and comfort, though in many of these places the scene is now most unhappily changed. Between Sofia and Tatar Bazardjik there branches off from the Hæmus to the south another range, called the Rodope Mountains, which, again turning east and south-east, forms the southern boundary (as does the Hæmus to the north) of the great valley of the Maritza, by far the largest and finest in Turkey. Both Phillipopolis and Adrianople are in this valley (or succession of plains), which, from the latter city again, runs south to the sea, near Didiasch. There is a railway—the most paying, I believe, in Turkey—to this latter place, which is a very rising port at the top of the Egean, and outside the Dardanelles. The Rodope

Mountains seem to contain a comparatively large population, in rich valleys and slopes. Batak, of dreadful notoriety, was an upland town in these mountains, though it will be afterwards explained why its situation was far from profiting it against attack. The hilly country, in connection with the Rodope range, seems to extend into East Macedonia. Westwards there is the valley of the large river which runs into the sea at Salonika, and some more open country intermixed with hills. Thessaly, I am told, is for the most part comparatively open, while Epirus is very hilly, but still contains large Greek and Wallachian villages. Thence, northwards through Albania, Herzegovina, &c., the western part of Turkey is well known to be very mountainous. Farther into the geography of the country I do not venture.

I have not attempted to include Asiatic Turkey in this short survey, and I shall only allude to Asia Minor so far as is necessary to understand the position of the Turks. I have been very anxious to find the home of the Osmanlee race, the country where they may fairly say that they are in their own, and not foreign conquerors'; but it is very difficult to find it. In truth, the Osmanlees seem to have been but a small Turkish tribe, coming, like the rest of the Turks, from Central Asia, who have become a great people rather by the conquest and absorption of other peoples than by their own natural increase. We know what facilities the

Mahommedan system affords for a process of that kind, all caste and other restrictions on marriage and quasi-marriage being absent. No country in the world offers a greater contrast between its ancient and its present condition than Asia Minor. Formerly it was full of rich, populous, and luxurious kingdoms, and we know it as the seat of the earliest and most flourishing Christian Churches. Now, notwithstanding some fringe of cultivation on the coasts, I gather that it is one of the least populous and cultivated of countries, far inferior in these respects, I take it, to European Turkey. So much of it seems to be elevated and uncultivated country—so much mere pasturage for the shepherds of Europe on the one side, and for Turkomans and Kurds on the other, that one wonders how room was found for all the rich States of antiquity.

All trace of the peoples of Asia Minor, so famous in ancient and in ecclesiastical history, seems to have disappeared—that is one of the most curious of historical problems. I cannot attempt confidently to solve it beyond the theory which I hazard, that they have been absorbed by Mahommedan conquerors. Traces of Christian races are, I understand, nowhere wanting in Asia Minor, but so far as I can gather they are either Greeks or Armenians. The Greek population of Asia (the islands apart) does not seem to be very large; they have, I take it, receded rather than advanced since ancient times. Although in some parts of the coast

they hold much of the soil as indigenous cultivators, I understand that this possession does not usually extend very far inland. In the interior their villages are few and far between, and though here as elsewhere they appear in the towns in a commercial character, they greatly yield to the Armenians in numbers and importance.

The Armenians no doubt constitute altogether a large population in Asiatic Turkey—how large I have no means of judging on reliable data, nor whether in any considerable portions of the country they form an actual majority of the population. At any rate they are quite an Asiatic people, and their chief strength is now, if I may so express it, at the back of the Turks, farther to the eastward, adjoining the Asiatic dominions of Russia and Persia. Though numerous and important in the towns of Asia Minor and in Constantinople itself, they are there mere settlers, and have no claim to an independent political position.

The Kurds again, who occupy so important a position in the hilly country to the south-east of Asia Minor, are clearly a Persian race. And the nomadic Turkomans, who seem to occupy a considerable position in Asiatic Turkey, are on all hands considered as quite distinct from the Osmanlees.

It will be remembered that Asia Minor was invaded and permanently occupied by Mahommedans at a time when the Mahommedan religion was much more aggres-

sive and proselytising than in later times. The Arabs repeatedly reached the Bosphorus, and after them, before the Osmanlees appeared on the scene, the Turkish sultans of Iconium, already zealous Mahommedans, had established themselves in almost the whole of Asia Minor. Probably then the Osmanlees found the country already Mahommedanised. Before they took Constantinople they had deprived the Greek emperors of the last remnant of authority in Asia, and established themselves in force on the Bosphorus. To this it is probably due that even at this day the Bosphorus forms a curiously marked ethnological division. On the Asiatic side the population is chiefly Turkish—on the European side almost wholly Greek; Constantinople itself being now for the most part shared between these two races and a large Armenian element.

I take it that while the Turks were in Asia they conquered, proselytised, absorbed. But when the Osmanlee sultans finally conquered the Roman-Greek empire, and established their own dominion in its place, Roman greatness and civilisation had much effect on them and their followers, already largely modified in race and character by the blood of the civilised races of Asia Minor; they wished to succeed to the position and prestige of those whom they had overcome, they used the emblems and the territorial name of Eastern Rome, and they sought to attract and protect the Greeks. Thus probably it has happened that in Europe

the Turks have never proselytised the mass of the population, have only won over, rather by favour than by fear, some of the most warlike tribes (as did the Mogul emperors some of the Rajpoot tribes in India), and for the rest have been excessively tolerant in religion.

All the Turks in Turkey (excepting the Turkomans to whom I have alluded) now call themselves Osmanlees. There is no distinction between an Osmanlee Turk and any other Turk; no doubt the Osmanlees amalgamated with the Seljukians and other Turks who went before them.

In Asia they have so completely absorbed the races who formerly occupied the country, and they so decidedly form the majority of the population (all seem to agree that this is the case), that I think we must consider Asia Minor, without the islands, to be the modern home of the Osmanlees or modern Turks, and now properly their country. But the moment the Bosphorus is crossed things are quite changed. No doubt the Turks have settled in the country in considerable numbers, but, not having proselytised the indigenous population, they everywhere remain settlers and aliens, with a language, religion, manners, and institutions of their own, in no degree amalgamated with the general population of the country. Holding the country as the garrison of a dominant race, the Turks in Europe seem to have been a good deal distributed with a view to military and strategical considerations. Al-

though, as I have said, the European shore of the Bosphorus is still held by Greek villagers, the Turks are numerous in the districts near Constantinople and Adrianople, which they share with the Greeks; also in the east of the Bulgarian country, and on the military frontier towards Russia, in the north-east. They also hold many important points in the Balkan, and they are scattered in smaller numbers in other parts of Turkey.

Although all the Turkish-speaking people are classed together as Osmanlees, these are distinguished from the Mahommedans of other races, speaking other languages, whom I shall presently notice. But let us now take a brief survey of the European and Christian races, who still everywhere form the substratum of the people of European Turkey, and in most parts of the country are the great majority of the population.

The country cannot be exactly mapped out according to races, because almost everywhere there is an overlapping and intermixture of races, something like what we find in India. True, the varieties are not so great as the castes and race-castes of India, but there are several Christian races and several Mahommedan races, and some races partly one and partly the other; and there are few parts of the country in which villages and families of other races are not a good deal intermixed with the prevailing race. Still, apart from the constant intermixture of Mahommedans, the parts of

the country in which one or other of the Christian races very much predominate can be pretty clearly marked off.

Allusion has already been made to the Greeks in the country about Constantinople, and as far as Adrianople. They are not merely people of the towns (in which character we know them best), but the agricultural peasants of the country. The Greeks are universally called in the East Roomees or Romans, and without minutely enquiring into the constituents of their blood, no doubt a good deal crossed, suffice it to say that they speak Greek and represent the people of the later Greek Empire, the natives of the country whom the Turks found there. Undoubtedly, if the Turks were driven to Asia, and we look to nationality, the Constantinople country, the European side of the Dardanelles, and all the peninsula between the Egean and the Black Sea from the base of Adrianople would be a Greek country. The Greeks form the great majority of the population in all the islands of the Egean, in most of Thessaly and Epirus, and in some districts of Macedonia near the sea. They form a fringe on the sea-board, both on the Egean shores of Thrace, and on those of the Black Sea. They are scattered far beyond these limits, forming a considerable and important portion of the population in towns, while Greek villages are found here and there; but nothing beyond the tracts which I have mentioned can be claimed as in any sense a Greek country.

Where the Greeks cease to prevail we come on the



Bulgarians, by far the most numerous and important people of Turkey ; and so much of the present Eastern Question depends on a due appreciation of the geographical area of the Bulgarian country, that it is most important that it should be rightly understood how much they occupy the whole centre, and, it may be said, body, of European Turkey. I have been unable to discover how the present 'Bulgaria,' as it is written across our maps, got there, applied as it is to the long tract between the Balkan and the Danube. The term is so applied neither by the Turks nor by the Christians ; and, although the Greeks have now seized the definition of the maps, and make out this to be the country of the Bulgarians, saying that the Bulgarians south of the Balkan are new-comers, they admit these new-comers to have come somewhere about the seventh or eighth century. Farther to the west, about Monastir and in the Salonica province, the Greeks say that Bulgarians have been settled more recently through Russian influence. The fact remains that there they are. The eastern portion of the Bulgaria of the maps is not much a Bulgarian country, being largely Mahomedan ; but all the rest of that country is quite Bulgarian, the Danube forming a pretty exact line of division between them and the Roumanians ; and on the south of the Balkan, almost as far as Salonika, the Bulgarian race prevails.

There is a small but very clear German ethnological

map by Kiepert lately published, which gives the races very well as far as they can be roughly delineated on a small scale. The Greeks are very angry about it, and say it is published in Slav interests and to their detriment; but I am bound to say that all my enquiries and personal observations, so far as they enable me to test Kiepert's map, go to confirm its general correctness. From collating consular and other reports, and other enquiries, I had made out the Bulgarian area to be much as Kiepert puts it before I had seen his map, and in the parts of the country which I visited my enquiries led to the same result. It is true that people who form a small minority in particular districts are not represented, but it would be scarcely possible to do so on so small a scale. It is enough that the map gives either the prevailing race, or a division of races where the population is not very unequally divided. I should say, however, that while the Turks are represented as very strong (perhaps are made too strong) in all the eastern part of the country, the small red spots which profess to represent them in the remainder of Turkey are hardly sufficiently numerous.

The great complaint of the Greeks is that they are not represented in the Phillipopolis district and all the country south of the Balkan, which they claim. In the town of Phillipopolis I enquired about it. The Greeks say they have 800 families—perhaps one-seventh of the population—no doubt a very important part, occupying

the best part of the town. Some of them, for aught I know, may be descendants of Macedonians settled there by Philip. There are no doubt some Greeks in other towns, but in the Phillipopolis country there are only three Greek villages, and if Kiepert had represented them there at all it must have been by very small spots indeed. The Greek bishop himself only claims 30,000 souls in all in a large and populous tract, where he has still a few Bulgarian adherents as well as Greeks. There can be no doubt that all about Phillipopolis the country is now really Bulgarian. Kiepert gives the Greeks the country up to and including Adrianople, and a little beyond—that seems about as much as they can fairly claim. From the Danube then to near Adrianople and Salonika, and from the Black Sea (less a small Greek fringe) to the Albanian hills, is the Bulgarian country, except so far as Turkish settlements are interspersed in greater or less degree. It will be seen from the map that this Bulgarian tract forms, as I have already said, the body of European Turkey.

I have been a good deal surprised to observe the sparseness of the rural population in the Greek part of the country, for the rural Greeks seem a vigorous and increasing people. Their villages abound in healthy-looking children, and one would suppose that they might have multiplied and filled the country. It is not so; one sees an immense amount of uncultivated land between Constantinople and Adrianople. It may

not be quite so fertile as the valley of the Maritza, but the parts which are cultivated, and highly cultivated, by the Greeks sufficiently show that it is capable of yielding very rich and valuable products. When I asked Greeks to account for this sparseness of their population, the only explanation I could get was, 'Oh, we are a commercial and pushing people; our people leave the villages to better themselves in towns.' But this seems hardly a sufficient solution.

The Bulgarians are certainly a fecund and increasing people, and their country is much more populous than the rest of Turkey. The original Bulgarians were no doubt Turanians, but they were early Slavonised, and their present language is undoubtedly Slav. I believe it is a good deal separated from the other Slav languages; it is distinguished, I am told, by the use of a definite article unknown to them. And the people are quite a separate people, not very nearly connected with any other Slavs, and with a character of their own. Both in their ancient and in their modern history they are very distinct from, though in many respects allied to, the Slavs. They are mainly an agricultural people, and thriving and good in that capacity.

In the north-west of Turkey we have the true Slavs and several closely allied peoples, who are not divided from one another by any such distinct line as that which separates them from the Bulgarians. I believe there can be no doubt that the Servians, Bosnians, and Mon-

tenegrins are absolutely the same race, and Kiepert gives the same colour to the Austrian Croatians and Slavonians, classing all these together (quite correctly I have no doubt) as the south-Slavs.

These south-Slavs come in immediate contact with the Bulgarians only on a part of the eastern frontier of Servia. To the south the Albanians more or less intervene. I understand that along a line from near Nissa to near the borders of Epirus the Albanians occupy the hills, the Bulgarians the lower country. Thence to the Adriatic the country is almost wholly Albanian.

The Albanians are well known. They have their own ancient language, but their affinities seem to be much more Greek than anything else. The Christian south-Albanians have a tendency to merge into Greeks, and a considerable part of modern Greece—Attica especially—has been colonised by Albanians (both north and south Albanians), who are now amalgamating with the Greeks.

Kiepert's map shows how completely the south Slavs are separated from the west Slavs or Czechs, by the Magyars, and how much more completely from the east Slavs or Russians, by the Roumanians. It also shows how much larger a people these latter are than we quite realise. Besides the political Roumania, they occupy a very large portion of Hungary, and some Russian territory. There are a good many of them in the north-east corner of Servia, but they do not pass

the Danube into the proper Turkish territory ; indeed I understand that the overflow of the population is, if anything, rather the other way—though the Bulgarians are not settled in Roumanian territory, they come over, I am told, at harvest time, like Irish reapers.

When I say that the modern Roumanians do not overpass the Danube, I do not allude to the Koutzo-Wallachs, who are settled in Epirus and scattered about Turkey, for they are very ancient settlers. It is the fashion to call them colonists, but they are very old colonists, who settled in the time of the Roman emperors, before the English settled in England. I suspect it would be more proper to say that these Koutzo-Wallachs are the remains of the Roumanian people formed by an amalgamation of Romans with the natives, before Bulgarians and Slavs occupied the country ; and that while, after the passage of the Bulgarians, the Roumanian language and race prevailed north of the Danube, in the south a remnant of the Roumanian people took refuge in the hills towards Epirus, and a few more in other hilly parts of the country, giving birth to the Wallachian shepherds of the present day. The Koutzo-Wallachs of Epirus and the Albanian border are, I am told, very prosperous. They are settled in large and fine villages in the hilly country there, have great commercial aptitudes, and do most of the carrying trade. Wallachs of this race are also found all over Roumelia, as prosperous

shepherds and drovers. In the autumn one sees them conducting their great flocks of sheep towards the Dardanelles, where they cross into Asia and find winter pasture on the plains of Troy, and other parts of that country.

I cannot find that the Koutzo-Wallachs have political aspirations; they seem to be satisfied with their material prosperity, and such local self-government as they can obtain. And, so far as I can learn, the Roumanians of Roumania make no claims beyond the Danube. They seem to be well satisfied with their present position, or look to any aggrandisement which events may give them north of the Danube. I shall therefore not again revert to the Roumanians.

The Turks seem not only to have skilfully placed their own settlements with a view to domination, but to have shrewdly managed to gain over to their religion and their cause some of the most influential of the natives, occupying the strongest positions. Some people say that many of the present Turks are really Bulgarians, converted in early days; the upper classes went over, it is said, for the sake of their lands, as they certainly did in some other parts of Turkey. I do not know if there is any historical evidence of this; at any rate, I have not gone back so far as to find any. There is certainly no modern evidence of it; all the Turks speak Turkish, and are in no way distinguished from Asiatic Turks. But they have converted to Mahommedanism a number.

of hill Bulgarians, now known as 'Pomaks.' As these people are almost all highlanders, I was inclined to suspect that they might be some sort of separate highland tribe of Bulgarians, but I have not been able to obtain any evidence of this, nor to learn the origin of the term 'Pomak.' Their language is still wholly Bulgarian, and in race they do not seem distinguishable from other Bulgarians. So far they are in no degree confounded with Turks. But, like most perverts, they are, in politics and religion, more Turk than the Turks, and occupying as they do strong hill tracts, especially in the Rodope Mountains, they are a great strength to the Turkish Government. This geographical position greatly affects the political situation of the Bulgarians, who have not, like the Greeks in Greece Epirus or Crete, the command of their own hill country, but are much overlooked by garrisons of Turks and Pomaks.

So again in the Albanian country fully half the Albanians, and those the fighting Albanians in the strongest country, have been converted to Mahommedanism, and send out a large surplus population of fighting men, who are conspicuous throughout Turkey, where guards, military police, and such like are required. In Bosnia, as is well known, the upper class of land-holders and their followers went over to Mahommedanism, and now form a large minority of the population. It seems that the Paulician Protestantism



was very strong in Bosnia, and was never extirpated ; so that, in addition to the temptation to save their lands and political position, the Bosnians were further tempted by dislike of the dominant Churches, and accepted a religion with which their own had something in common.

The Tartars are settled in considerable numbers in the north-east of Turkey. I did not see any of their villages, but I understand that they are in no degree the sort of people whom we are apt to suppose Tartars to be. In features they are said to be quite European, and in manners they are a very good, industrious, well-to-do people, quite superior to most of the other Mahommedans, and quite capable of living in amity with Christians. It will therefore probably be unnecessary again to revert to the Tartars as a disturbing political element.

The Circassians are very different ; yet, as we were at one time inclined to over-praise the Circassians when we attributed to them every virtue, as the enemies of the Russians, so now we are, I think, inclined to be a little hard on them. They are certainly a very pleasant, frank, good-looking, smartly dressed, soldier-like people ; but their history and their position have made them most inveterate plunderers. They are, undoubtedly, very much given to 'loot,' especially in the shape of cattle-lifting and horse-robbery, a weakness for which descendants of Scotch Highland Borderers may have

some sympathy. On the other hand, I am told that they have some chivalrous feeling, and will not kill women and children as other Asiatics do without remorse; but whether this is really so, or is a colouring of the philo-Circassians, I am unable to say. Certainly the Circassians on their arrival in Turkey were very greatly neglected and ill-used; many of them perished miserably from exposure and want. However, the Turks found that they could utilise them, and very systematically planted them in villages here and there, all over the country, as a garrison on whom they could depend against the Christians. The Circassians got land, but little else; and though they have settled and cultivated as well as could be expected under the circumstances, their position would have very much impelled them (even if they had not been already prone enough to that sort of thing) to eke out their means by robbery and cattle-lifting among the populations in which they found themselves, protected but not paid. Here then was an element naturally prominent when the time for general 'loot' arrived.

One more Mahommedan or quasi-Mahommedan element, with similar predatory proclivities in a different shape, is conspicuous in Turkey—viz. the Gypsies. They seem to be very numerous there. It appears to be their way to adopt more or less the dominant religion of the country where they are; so in Turkey they are, or pretend to be, Mahommedans.

They are curiously dark, quite unlike the rest of the population; in colour and appearance one could not distinguish them from the similar class in India. Like them they often encamp outside villages, under mats. Perhaps more often they settle for two or three years in miserable semi-hovels, till the fancy moves them to migrate. In occupation, character, &c., they are very much like the same class in India, England, and elsewhere. This also was an element very ready for 'loot.'

I think I have mentioned now the principal races of European Turkey, both Mahomedan and Christian. There remains the foreign element. I have noticed the Armenians in connection with Asia. It would be a great mistake to suppose that in Constantinople they are only merchants and scribes. Most of the porters there are Armenians, and many of the boatmen; they form a large and laborious population. In many other towns they are found, but I believe that there are no rural agricultural Armenians in European Turkey, or scarcely any. Singularly enough, however, they are found in that capacity north of Turkey. I am told that there is a considerable settlement of agricultural Armenians in Hungary, but I did not learn how they came there.

Jews are very numerous in Turkey, and they almost all speak Spanish. It seems that when the Christians expelled them from Spain they took refuge

with the more tolerant Turks. They are numerous and important in Constantinople, and in almost all Turkish towns. A gentleman personally acquainted with Salonika surprised me by a statement of the great degree to which they form the majority of the population of that town, which I am afraid to repeat lest there should be any mistake. The Jews do not seem to take any political part, so for that purpose they may be left aside.

In Constantinople, and all the commercial centres, many European foreigners are found of almost every country except Russia. It is somewhat singular that scarcely a Russian is to be found in Turkey, not even in Constantinople. Bulgarian priests and schoolmasters who have visited Russia, and received more or less education there, and some Bulgarian *émigrés* who tried Russia and returned, may be called Russians; but, whatever the cause, of real Russians there are none.

The English Levantine families may almost be put in a separate class; although not numerous, they are conspicuous and important about Constantinople, Smyrna, &c. To a visitor they are rather perplexing—speaking generally unalloyed English—and affecting the dress, manners, and tone of Englishmen, while they have at the same time another side which is wholly Levantine. Very many of them are Levantine-born, and those who are not have often married

Levantine wives, with whom they have settled into Levantines. Many of our consuls, diplomatists, dragomen, &c., belong to this class.

There is no reliable census of the population of European Turkey. The best estimates put it at about 8,000,000 or 9,000,000, excluding the tributary States. I should think that, including Constantinople, it is probably more. The Mahommedans are better counted for military purposes than the Christians, and their relative numbers are, I believe, exaggerated. The excess of population over the usual estimate is probably among the Christians. The estimates would give about 3,500,000 Mahommedans and 5,500,000 Christians in a population of 9,000,000. Looking to the extent and populousness of the Bulgarian country, I should say that there cannot be less than from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 of Bulgarians, possibly more. Then if we take all the Greeks—town, country, and islands of the Egean—they can scarcely be under (rather, I should say, with Crete, over) 2,000,000; add to the Greeks, the Christian Albanians, Bosnians, and Koutzo-Wallachs, also the Armenians settled in Europe, and the Jews—that would give, say 4,000,000 of non-Mahommedans, or, with the Bulgarians, from 8,000,000 to 9,000,000 altogether. If, again, we deduct from the total Mahommedan population the large number of Mahommedan Albanians and Bosnians (say 1,000,000

or 1,200,000), and all the other non-Turkish Mahomedans, Pomaks, Tartars, Circassians, and Gypsies, we might suppose the estimate of the Mahomedans to be even exceeded, and still there will remain not 2,000,000 of Turks in Europe, say 500,000 in and about Constantinople, and under 1,500,000 in all the rest of the country. The truth is probably rather under than over this estimate.

The population of Turkey is distributed somewhat, as it is in India, in race-clusters, most rural villages being either entirely or to a predominant degree of one race, while some villages and most towns are mixed. I have not found, what is not unfrequent in India, mixed agricultural villages in which one quarter is Mahomedan, another Christian (or Hindoo), while the land is shared on equal terms, and I could not ascertain exactly whether there are any such; probably the political position of the two races does not admit of this. Where agricultural villages are mixed, the Mahomedans generally occupy a superior position, and the Christians one of inferiority. I observed that there are many pure Christian villages, both large and small, in the Bulgarian country; there are many small towns—I may say considerable towns, up to 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants—which are purely Bulgarian—all those lately destroyed were of this character; whereas I found few quite purely Turkish villages except small ones.

Generally the larger Turkish land-holders in Turkish villages had some Bulgarian farm-servants, and there was a Christian shopkeeper or two. In the towns which are not purely Bulgarian the population is almost always very much mixed, there being Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians, Jews, and others.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE MAHOMMEDAN RELIGION.

BEFORE going farther I wish to make some remarks regarding the Mahommedan religion, for ideas on that subject much colour the views taken of the Eastern Question. It is somewhat difficult to deal with the subject, because we do not find the essentials of the Mahommedan religion clearly expressed in small compass, as are those of the Christian religion in the Gospels. The Koran is by no means a clear and simple book like our Testament—far from it; it is difficult to make much of it, and Mahommedans rely principally on the later lego-religious books. It is somewhat as if we had no Bible, and were obliged to get our Christianity from the works of the fathers only—a state of things which leaves room for much dispute, and renders it possible to find texts for almost anything.

For myself I confess that I am not learned in the literature of the Mahommedan. But I have lived among Mahommedans, and in very intimate contact with



them the greater part of my life, and I take their religion and laws as I find them in practice.

First, however, it is very necessary to mark the distinction between the religion of which Mahomet was the Prophet, and the Semitic institutions and laws which we are too apt to confound with it; though in truth they are entirely pre-Mahommedan. By far the most important and conspicuous of these latter is the Semitic form of marriage and the family. We are so familiar with these in the Old Testament that it is, I hope, scarcely necessary to call to mind that Mahomet had no hand whatever in inventing polygamy, divorce, and all the rest of it. I rather suppose that whatever innovations were introduced were in favour of the woman. We see little of free marriage in the Old Testament. Rachel and Leah were served for and bought, and once married were, I take it, almost as much the property of Jacob as any slaves. We hardly realise that under Mahommedan law the rights of married women are preserved to a degree which we have not yet ventured on, and I hope never shall. A marriage with a free Mahommedan woman is a pure and simple civil contract of partnership; the woman gives up none of her property and none of her rights, but retains them just as intact as if she had never been married. She may and constantly does sue her husband. True there is this inequality, that the husband can divorce the wife, while the wife cannot

divorce the husband. But, in practice, a free married woman is always protected by extravagant settlements, which render it almost impossible for her husband to divorce her without consent; whereas the woman, with her independent rights, can make herself so disagreeable, that he is not likely to refuse to be rid of her if she wishes it. Hence it is scarcely surprising that the lower form of marriage with slave girls, or concubines, has always been much in favour with Mahomedans.

The sacred and indissoluble marriage of the Arians being unknown to the Semites, the proper Semite family is essentially different from the Arian. While the Arian family consists of the man, his wife, and his children; that of the Semite consists of the male head, with his wives, concubines, children, and slaves, of all of whom he can get rid when he pleases. In practice most Mahomedans are in these modern days a good deal like other people, finding one wife quite as much as they can comfortably manage, and keeping her if they like her; but the character of their marriage and their ways in connection with it are different from those of Christians, as are their ideas regarding the seclusion of women, the covering of the face, &c. It results that, though Christian and Mahomedan men may be on very good terms outside their homes, there can be little or no intercourse between families. Thus a great social gulf is established.

For the rest the laws of the Mahommedans are, I believe, a good deal derived from the Roman jurisprudence. They anticipate the Code Napoléon in regard to the compulsory division of property at death, taking that, I believe, from an earlier source. Altogether they have a system of laws not bad according to the lights of the days in which they were compiled. They have very arbitrary and irrational laws of evidence, prescribing the cases in which eye-witnesses are necessary, the number of witnesses required to prove certain facts or offences, the non-admissibility of the evidence of unbelievers for many purposes, and so on. But, after all, we are the last people who can throw stones at them for these follies, seeing how recently our law of evidence was quite as bad, and that it is not by any means completely cured yet. The very point in their law of evidence on which we dwell with such indignation, the exclusion of unbelievers, is almost the last which we have surrendered, if indeed we have yet completely done so. How long is it since the testimony of unbelievers was admitted in English courts? We have step by step let in one kind of heretic or misbeliever and another. I am not quite certain if all are admitted now; I take it a Mahommedan was excluded till quite the other day. This, then, is no radical part of the Mahommedan religion nor peculiar to it, but a mere tyranny of the lawyers, such as we are well accustomed to.

There is this difficulty, however, about the laws of the Mahommedans (which makes their case worse than ours), that the lawyers, pretending to a religious sanction for their laws, are in a stronger position to resist reform. It is sometimes said that the Mahommedans are fortunate in having no priests properly so called; perhaps it might be better if they had, for they might then (as we have in later days), by dividing the priestly power with the lawyers, and setting one against the other, have obtained comparative freedom; whereas the Mahommedan lawyers, holding the ecclesiastical power as well, have been found impregnable by many very strong rulers.

We must, however, always remember that by the Mahommedan laws the power of an arbitrary ruler is very much limited. It is a great mistake to suppose that a Mahommedan ruler, however high, is by rights a despotic sovereign. He is a strictly limited constitutional monarch, the interpreters of the constitution being the lawyers. Of course many of the barbarous rulers who have accepted Mahommedanism have set at nought the Mahommedan constitutional laws, just as many Christian monarchs, barbarian and civilised, have set aside the commonest precepts of Christianity; but I think that, more than in Europe, the law sanctioned by religion has at last more or less prevailed. It seems to be very much the nature of man to be tyrannised over by some one; some nations are

tyrannised over by tyrants proper, some by lawyers ; and in this respect the Mahommedans on one side, the English on the other, when escaping from despots have fallen under the dominion of lawyers. We submit to much, for we feel that we greatly owe English freedom to the lawyers of other days ; and so, in spite of all defects, the Mahommedans owe much to their laws.

Both the Mahommedan laws and the whole spirit of their religion are really extremely democratic, and well calculated to preserve the freedom of freemen. The equality of man is carried into practical life by them to a degree which has never prevailed in Christendom, where the Arian caste-system has so largely prevailed. This doctrine of equality is apparent in all their manners and institutions. No man feels that he is by birth debarred from being the equal of any other man, and no man is placed so low that he may not rise to the highest position. It is no doubt an inconsistency that the Mahommedan law recognises slavery, and that institution has been terribly abused by barbarians professing Mahommedanism ; yet we are not to take the brutal, slave-dealing Turkomans as fair specimens of Mahommedans. After all, the slavery of prisoners of war was the first mitigation of wholesale slaughter, and, if slavery there was to be, nothing can be more humane than the Mahommedan form of slavery : the slave becomes a member of the family, is only subject to the same *patria potestas* as the wives and children ; he is

one of the heirs of his master, and constantly rises to his master's place and position. Predial serfdom the Mahommedans have always abolished, and other slavery than the domestic slavery of the family the proper Mahommedan law does not admit.

Coming then to the Mahommedan religion, as apart from the civil laws which they found consolidated and amended, I believe that there is an immense deal of good about the religion, and that our ideas regarding it are terribly coloured by ancient prejudices. There seems some reason to suppose that the religion of Mahomet was, in a greater or less degree, derived from the same sources from which Protestantism eventually sprang—it to some extent resulted from the abuses and corruptions of Christianity. The Mahommedans are Unitarians, but worship God in a very earnest way; their religion affects their manners and daily conduct perhaps more than does that of most Christians. In point of sobriety alone they have an enormous advantage over modern quasi-Christians; what the Permissive Bill may never effect, the Mahommedan religion does effect. Many practical virtues are enforced by this religion in a high degree. Their prayerfulness, and what I may call active belief in God, much exceeds the sort of easy-going religion so common among us.

It is the fashion to represent the Mahommedans as fanatical and intolerant towards unbelievers in the highest degree; that I believe to be in great part a mistake.

Of late it has been said and repeated that it is a part of the religion of every Mahommedan to kill as many Christians as possible, and that, by counting up a certain number killed, they think themselves secure of heaven. That is entirely a libel. There is not and never was any such doctrine ; the conduct of the Mahommedans for 1,200 years shows that it is so. It provokes me to hear people, who ought to know better, talk of this terrible Mahommedanism. Even some people who have been in India, especially ladies, seem totally to forget that they have spent much of their lives in entire trust on Mahommedan servants—that the favourite butler, the confidential private man-milliner, the servants who took care of their children, the people who pulled punkahs over them while they were asleep at night, were all or most of them Mahommedans, and never attempted to go to heaven by killing them and their children, nor had they themselves the least apprehension of such a catastrophe. The craving of the Mahommedans, as such, for Christian blood is purely a myth ; only so much is true that in early days, when the Arabs were a conquering people, they were sustained by the doctrine that to slay unbelievers in *battle*, and to meet death there, gave a great claim to indulgence. And even now the sensual paradise of the Mahommedans seems to have greater attractions for them than our purer heaven for us ; we seem to need a more pressing picture of the pains of the wicked

to restrain us. There remains this, however, to be said on the subject of killing unbelievers, that the Mahommedans, in common with other Orientals, have not that respect for human life which we have in very recent times derived from our Christianity. The Mahommedan religion in no degree or manner encourages its followers to take the life even of enemies, but it fails to restrain the human disposition to do so. It does lay down excellent rules for sparing and protecting the vanquished who submit, but I do not know that it enjoins any mercy in fight; and we do not find anywhere in the East that distinction between men, and women and children, which has been established in Europe in our days. If enemies are to be attacked and killed, no Oriental thinks of sparing the women and children. Look at all the Old Testament histories; they spared very little in those days. In the Indian Mutiny there were many cases in which our people were spared; but throughout the whole history of that terrible time I do not remember a single case in which the men were killed, the women and children spared. Throughout a great breadth of country, at hundreds of places, the Europeans were killed or spared, but always they were either killed or spared, without regard to sex or age: that shows how Orientals feel on the subject. And not Orientals only. I could hardly have believed how near our times such ideas came in Europe, till the English treatment of



the Irish, in Queen Elizabeth's time, was exposed by, I think, Mr. Froude. There is a terrible story, not only of what was done, but (which, as a sign of feeling is a good deal worse) what was related with an apparent unconsciousness of wrong by a high functionary, who in a public despatch gravely relates how the wife and children of a certain local Irish rebel, a 'yellow-haired' Macdonnell, were butchered before his eyes, and particularly dwells on the rage and distress of Macdonnell, witnessing the whole proceeding from the other side of a narrow strait. I am afraid the fact is, that it is human nature to slaughter enemies and the families of enemies, indiscriminately, and that none of the religions of the world, not even Christianity, have restrained their people from doing so, till in comparatively recent times a more just view of Christianity and civilisation has grown up in Europe.

As regards toleration, the best of the Mahommedans, far from being intolerant, are models of toleration, and set an example which we could wish that all Christians would follow. Vanquished people who do not accept Mahommedanism are not admitted to the same privileges as Mahommedans, but they are, or by law ought to be, tolerated and protected in the free exercise of their own religion. Compare the freedom of religious belief and worship in many Mahommedan countries with the intolerance of many Christian countries. There may be exceptions on the part of some barbarous

Mahommedans, but, on the other hand, some great Mahommedan powers have exhibited what may be called almost the perfection of religious toleration—witness both the Moguls in India and the Turks in Europe.

In respect of all that I have said, it will be borne in mind that Mahommedanism, like Christianity, sits differently on different races; there are true Mahommedans, who adhere to the tenets and the laws of their religion, and there are barbarian Mahommedans, who abuse and corrupt their religion. The early Arab Mahommedans had many virtues, with much high-handed lust of power. Some Arian races, who have embraced Mahommedanism, have thrown into it something of the form of religious zeal which belongs to many branches of that race. Many races who have been led to become Mahommedans by political circumstances bear the religion very lightly indeed. Some have made it a pretext for cruel practices and gross oppressions. Its effect on the Turks I shall notice presently.

On the whole, my impression of the Mahommedan religion is, that it is radically a much lower religion than true Christianity, but that in practice it is at least as good as, perhaps better than, the corrupt forms of Christianity so long prevalent, and which were so overlaid by Roman mythology and Greek metaphysics that the essentials of the religion are greatly lost to practice. The Mahommedans miss the vital principle of Christianity, the humility, mercy, charity, and love

of our neighbour ; but then very few Christians have practised these parts of their faith ; while the Mahommedans, taking a lower standard, more easily accepted by weak and corrupt man, have better carried their religion into practice. While the corruptions of Christianity have largely conciliated and attracted women, Mahommedanism is more a religion of man, and more influences them. They are certainly not ashamed of open prayer and the forms of religion. There are good and bad of course among them, as among all religions, and they have some great vices, but I believe that a very large number of them are influenced for good.

It is a minor matter, but I confess that I prefer the architecture and style of the great Mahommedan mosques to our cathedrals. I think they are places more becoming, and better fitted for the worship of God. And naturally to a Presbyterian taste the style of their service is very superior to that of most Christian services.

The experiences of the Arab dominion amply show that the Mahommedan religion is not inconsistent with a very high degree of vigour, civilisation, and refinement, judged by the standards of a thousand years ago ; and if Mahommedan civilisation has since declined, I think the causes are to be sought in historical events, the inferiority of the races on whom the mantle of the Arabs has fallen, and those pre-Mahommedan institutions to which I have alluded, rather than to the religion.

The great question is, whether it is possible so to reform the Mahommedan laws and institutions as to make them compatible with modern civilisation, and especially to make it possible for Mahommedans to live in equality of civil rights with Christians, without external compulsion. That is a great problem which we have to deal with in India. We have already shown that, under a superior power, holding an equal hand over all, Mahommedans and non-Mahommedans may live very well together, but we have not yet altered Mahommedan laws (except the law of evidence) to suit modern times. I believe that the whole future of the Mahommedans depends on the question whether the laws of another age, for which their lawyers claim a religious sanction, can be altered and modernised. The reforming Turks say that they can, and quote texts to show that it was from the first laid down that the laws might be altered according to circumstances of times and place. I believe that it is so, but it will require a very strong hand, and very favourable circumstances, to bring about a successful reform of that kind.

Still more difficult is the question of putting Mahommedans on a footing of real, civil, and political equality with non-Mahommedans, or for the present purpose we may say with Christians. Not only a very radical reform of the Mahommedan laws is required, but also a reform of the social institutions of the Mahommedans. It is hard to expect perfect unity and

civil union between people whose social institutions are so different that there can be no intercourse of families. Toleration, as I have said, the Mahommedans have conceded in a very high degree, but not equality. And when we remember how difficult it has been, and is, to obtain in Europe equality of civil rights for those who differ from the dominant religions by but a very little, we may imagine how difficult a task it must be to unite in any system of real and equal self-government people so widely separated as Christians and Mahommedans. They would be a wonderful people who should effect such a transformation for themselves under the most favourable circumstances, and in the absence of disturbing elements outside.

I myself do not see why the day should not come when religion shall be a thing apart altogether from civil rights, and people shall regulate their affairs in this world without regard to the prospects of their neighbours in the next. I do not see why the Mahommedans should not be brought within the pale of common rights of this kind. The Jews had much the same laws as the Mahommedans, and claimed a similar religious sanction for them, yet they seem now to conform to our civil institutions. We do not hear that it is a grievance that English Jews cannot regulate their households by the polygamic laws of the Old Testament. The modernisation of the Mahommedans would be a grand experiment. But I confess I do not see where it

could successfully be tried in countries of mixed religions without the exercise of control by some superior power while the experiment is in progress.

There is one other question in connection with Mahommedanism which is at present important—viz, what the French call the *solidarité* of the Mahomedan peoples. I was glad to see that the French papers took it up, and showed very clearly and rightly that there is no more ‘*solidarité*’ among Mahommedans than there is among Christians. But it is very difficult to eradicate a popular error which has once taken root. ‘Great effects from little causes spring,’ and there is no better illustration of that proverb than the growth of an idea on this subject in the British mind. A good many years ago, on the occasion of the visit of the Sultan, a great ball was given in his honour, and it being from circumstances inconvenient to charge it to British sources, India was made to pay. It was very unjust to do so, but after all the matter was a trifle. India owes much to England, and the thing might have been forgotten. But it so happened that, in the endeavour to justify what could not be justified, some one (I don’t know who) developed out of his inner conscience the idea—The Sultan bears the title of Commander of the Faithful, Khalif of the Mahommedans—a large proportion of our Indian subjects are Mahommedans; clearly then the Sultan is their religious head, and it is most proper that they should

pay for a ball to enable the great world of London to stare at him. This idea, begotten probably by some, who neither knew nor cared whether it was true or untrue, somehow took root, and is now reproduced as an important factor in present political complications. Grave and sensible men say one to another: 'Ah, yes, it is all very well to let the Turks go, but what a dreadful excitement it will cause among the 40,000,000 of our Mahommedan subjects! To hold India, it is a necessity that we should not offend their religious prejudices.' From us the idea has been caught up by some of the English-speaking and -reading Mahommedans in India, and by the Turks themselves. The Turkish newspapers have been lately full of it, and prefixing to our 40,000,000 a modest 1 to represent the rest of the Mahommedan world, they fix at 140,000,000 the number of Mahommedans who will march to their aid if they are hard pressed.

I put aside for the present the question of political or politico-religious sympathy, but I do assert in the most unqualified manner that the idea of any direct religious connection between the Sultan of Turkey and the Indian Mahommedans, that he is, or ever has been, in any sense whatever the religious head of any one of them, is absolutely and entirely untrue. It would be quite as correct to say that the Emperor of Russia is the religious head of the English and French Christians. The only difference is, that while we do know a good

deal of the Emperor of Russia, the Indian Mahommedans are more separated from and know and care far less about the Sultan of Turkey. Not only is there no direct connection between the Turks and the Indian Mahommedans, but history would point to a direct antagonism between the two. The Mahommedan rulers of India, from whom the Indians have derived so much of their language, literature, and cultivation—Arabs, Persians, Affghans, and Moguls—have all been the bitter enemies of the Turks. The Mogul emperors claimed descent from the man who carried a Turkish sultan about in a cage. They were probably in their own eyes, certainly in those of their Indian subjects, much greater men than the Turkish sultan. Down to quite the other day the Mogul emperor was, in form at least, the supreme ruler of all Mahommedan States in India, and the fountain of authority, honours, titles, and everything else, we being the Mayors of his palace. To suppose that he and his Mahommedan subjects owned any religious allegiance to the Sultan of Turkey is a downright absurdity. As a matter of fact, I again assert that there never has been any such connection, and that every Indian Mahommedan perfectly well knows this to be the case.

I have heard some people say, ‘Oh, the Sheeas no doubt can’t recognise the Sultan, but surely he is the head of the Soonnees?’ That idea is founded on a misapprehension of the facts. The Sheeas are a compact



body of Persian dissenters, but it is quite a mistake to suppose that under the name of Soonnees all the rest of the Mahommedans are united. The fact is that, just as among Christians, so among Mahommedans, there are many divisions—religious, political and ecclesiastical.

There have been and are in different parts of the Mahommedan world sects holding tenets somewhat akin to those of the Sheeas, especially in Egypt and Syria. In Arabia we know that the Wahabee Protestants have a very strong hold, and their ideas have largely spread in other countries. Among Soonnees there are many sects and varieties of doctrine, and many divisions, especially as regards politico-ecclesiastical government. The Mahommedan world has from very early days been constantly divided most completely. At one time there were as many as eleven different khalifs entirely independent of one another, and from the time of the first successors of Mahomet there never has been any semblance of union.

The Turks were, even after their conversion, treated by the Arabs as barbarous semi-Mahommedans. The law-books provide special rules for dealing with Turks, as people who are neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, neither avowed infidels nor fully accepted as Mahommedans, but slave-dealing barbarians to be made the best of.

The present Osmanlee dynasty seems to have assumed the title of khalif when they conquered the

khalifs of Egypt, themselves quite a local and sectarian dynasty, on the same principle, I suppose, on which a New Zealander claims land because he has eaten the last possessor. The claim to the headship of the Church in Turkey, like that of English and Russian sovereigns in their own countries, was probably useful for purposes of government, and gave the sultan a certain control over the Mahommedan lawyers. How far his religious character has much weight in the minds of his Turkish subjects I have not been able to ascertain; certainly the Softas did not hesitate to coerce him when they were dissatisfied, and the Turks seem to have borne the deposition of two vicegerents of God in three months with remarkable composure. Be this as it may, the sultan's claim to a religious khalifate was never acknowledged one rood beyond the limits of his political authority. In these days I believe that the khans of the Turkoman country, when pressed by the Russians, and even the Achinese at Sumatra, when pressed by the Dutch and refused assistance by the English, have in a sort of way volunteered to attorn to the sultan, sought to acknowledge him as their head, and invoked his assistance against their enemies; but these are palpable political moves of recent date.

I do not at all deny that Mahommedans who get up modern politics may very naturally sympathise with the Turks, just as we ought, I think, to sympathise with the Christians, though they have no direct con-

nection with us. So far as the Indian Mahommedans know anything about the matter, their sympathies probably really are, or would be, in this direction ; but to suppose that the 40,000,000 of our Mahommedan subjects are, or are likely to be, seriously excited on the subject is quite an error. Whatever feeling it may be possible to get up on the subject is mainly due to the newspapers, and the freedom of copying and travestyng ideas derived from Europe which we have given to the native press. I have on another occasion explained that the great majority of the Indian Mahommedans are humble agriculturists of the lower classes, who accepted Mahommedanism when the higher caste Hindoos held out—upwards of 20,000,000 of them being in Bengal alone, and some 10,000,000 in the Punjab territories—most of these latter among the very best of our subjects. The only religious zeal which (chiefly in connection with agrarian questions) has at times threatened to be troublesome is among sectarians, holding tenets more or less allied to those of the Wahabees, the special enemies of the Turks. The Mahommedans of India have seen the dominion of their own faith in India overturned before their eyes ; they have seen many Mahommedan princes deposed, and their dominions annexed by the British. In these days they have seen the King of Oude so treated, under circumstances of, to say the least, very doubtful justice ; they have seen

their own great Mogul deposed and sent as a felon to a convict settlement; all this the mass of Indian Mahommedans have seen without wincing, I may say. Who mercilessly hunted down the Sepoys during the mutiny, even when they had set up a Mahommedan emperor at Delhi? Not only the Mahommedans of the Punjab, but the unwarlike Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal. Clearly there is no *solidarité* among the Mahommedans in India itself. It is really, then, I must say, almost absurd to suppose that there could be any very strong feeling among them for the misfortunes of a distant and alien potentate in Turkey, except so far as such a feeling may be got up among a limited class.

I have already said that among the very small class of Mahommedans who read European news and are influenced by European ideas a certain sympathy with the Turks would have been natural enough. If English education had been as common among them as it is among the Hindoos, and they had been as much accustomed to affect modern political ideas, I should not have been at all surprised at the sort of agitation which has been recently attempted in the presidency towns; the Baboos of the young Bengal party, and the corresponding class in Bombay, would certainly have 'posed' in that way with great effect in anything similarly touching Hindoos. But the Mahommedans are such recent beginners at that sort of

thing, that, looking to the prominent part taken in promoting the 'Indo-Turk idea by a few prominent Mahommedans, who have grievances and political objects of their own, and who are thoroughly practised in the Indo-European forms of intrigue and political machinations, I have much suspicion that the thing has been fostered with an object. Of course it suits such people admirably to promote a belief in the political importance of the Indian Mahommedans, and the necessity of conciliating them by every possible means. If they are dreadfully irritated by our treatment of the Grand Turk, they can only be calmed by yielding to the demands of these same high-placed Mahommedans, who assume that they represent the 40,000,000.

However, after all, the results of the excessive freedom of tongue and pen which we allow in India have not yet been very serious, and will not be so on this occasion; so we can afford to be easy, even independently of that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer so rightly said, that we should not consent to hold India on the terms of being debarred from doing what we think right elsewhere by the fear of our Indian subjects.

## CHAPTER III.

THE CHARACTER AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE  
PEOPLE OF TURKEY.

WE are apt to suppose the Turks to be a rough, brutal people. I do not think this is really the case, under ordinary circumstances. On the contrary, they seem to be by nature an orderly people, as well behaved as could be expected, when we consider their position and the character of the government under which they live, and of which they are the instruments. Almost all those who have come much in contact with the ordinary Turks are unanimous in their praise. Perhaps more is seen of the character of a man when he is being made into a soldier than under most other circumstances, and all the English officers who have commanded Turks agree that there could not be a more orderly, better behaved set of men. I have asked how they are compared to Pathans (Affghans) from our Indian frontier, and am assured that they cannot be put into comparison with these latter—they are so very much quieter and

easier to deal with. They seem to be more like the best of our Punjab Mahommedans. All the correspondents and others who have lately been with the Turkish army are as well agreed in praising the Turkish soldier as they are in condemning the Turkish officer. The Asiatic Turks are said to be particularly docile, probably because they have not been thrown so much into a position of dominance and antagonism towards the Christians as some of their European brethren. I gather that the rural Turk, when not spoilt by circumstances of this kind, is generally a good sort of man, honest, sober, and patient; religious in his way, not prone to ordinary crime, and very amenable to decent government. Even in Constantinople, where things are seen at their worst, and where, in the crowded uncomfortable streets and bazaars, people often imbibe prejudices against the Turks, it seems to me that to an unprejudiced observer their conduct must appear remarkably good. There is no great city in the world, with such various elements, where there is so much security with so little police interference, and my impression was that if you went into the town with a frank mind and civil manner you had nothing really to complain of. True, there are no footpaths, and if you do not get out of the way you may be run down either by a mounted official or by a gang of porters carrying a heavy load; but I take it the official would not be very different in India. And as for the porters, whom you

probably set down for brutal and domineering Turks, fanatically anxious to reduce a Christian to a pancake, they are probably in truth humble and innocent Armenians, and their right of way in the middle of the road is nothing but that levelling spirit which gives the man labouring under a burden the preference over him who has no burden.

I attribute the comparatively mild character of the modern Turk to his blood, which is really no longer Turk, but which I suppose to be principally that of the luxurious and effete peoples of Asia Minor, who have so completely disappeared, and whom I believe to have been absorbed by the Turks. Their physique is very fine, but there is a want of power about the shape of the head, and their mental power and active energy do not seem to be great. In these respects they are not only far behind the Greeks, but various competent observers agree that they are much inferior to several other Mahommedan races—not only immensely inferior to the regular Arabs, but decidedly inferior to the modern Egyptians and people of Tunis. As cultivators, I am told that they are far behind the Egyptians; and for commerce and other pushing industries they show no aptitude whatever. It may be said, if they are really of the blood of the old civilised races of Asia Minor, why should they not show intellectual power and energy as well as the Greeks and others? My reply is, that it is abundantly evident that the races who have been ab-



sorbed by the Mahommedans were inferior in energy to the Greeks, who are not absorbed ; that it is the law of human races as of other organisms to become effete after a certain course, and that these races had become effete ; that the intermixture of Turkish blood if it strengthened their physique was not calculated to improve their minds—that although there is much in blood, there is also much in education, and the modern Turks as a dominant race have been for many ages taught to despise commerce and quill-driving ; and that, finally, the Turks have been placed at a great disadvantage, so much military service being required of them that they have not a fair chance in agriculture and arts. I am told that in many of their villages you find few but old men, women, and children.

My view, then, is that the Turks represent the effete races of Asia Minor, not improved for purposes of modern progress by the strain of Central-Asiatic blood, and that they are now themselves effete ; while the Greeks represent a higher race, which, if once effete, has been regenerated in the fire of adversity and hardened and improved by a large admixture of North-barbarian blood. Similarly the Bulgarians, Roumanians, &c. represent races largely crossed and improved by this barbarian blood, whether they have adopted a Slavonic or retained a Latin language. With all this, it must be admitted that the common Turks have some of the manly virtues of a dominant race, while the Greeks and

Armenians have some of the cunning vices due to long subjection.

My view of the Mahommedan religion will have shown that in my opinion that religion is by no means inconsistent with the generally well-behaved character which I have attributed to the Turk. But one is constantly told—so constantly, and by so many people, that without much fuller inquiry than I have found possible, I am not prepared to deny it—that the Turks are especially fanatic for their religion. ‘Yes, they are very good in an ordinary way,’ people say, ‘but they are dreadfully fanatic: touch their religious feelings in any way, and you will find them devils.’ There is a good deal of disposition to attribute excessive fanaticism to the profession of religions which we do not understand. We have sometimes exaggerated these things in India, and found in the end that evils and scandals supposed to be very deeply founded in religion are more easily dealt with than we supposed. So as regards Turkish fanaticism I can only say that it is not apparent to the casual observer who has not prejudged the matter, and that I have met a very few but those very weighty people very well acquainted with the Turks who *have* expressed doubts of the very fanatical character attributed to them. For it is truly said, how do they show it? Certainly not by intolerance towards Christians. I have already said that they are most remarkable for tolerance; and again I say that in no other country

in the world has a ruling race been more persistently tolerant towards subjects professing a religion different from their own. Not only have the Christians the most perfect freedom of religion and religious worship, but they are allowed to conduct their ceremonies, processions, &c., in public with an unrestrained freedom which is perfectly astonishing. I am sure that in scarcely any, if any, country of Christian Europe is there such freedom. I believe that there was some rule against the Christians building spires to their churches in rivalry of the minarets, but if so that was the only mark of inferiority.

In Constantinople one was told that the people in the mosques were dreadfully fanatic, and that no European could see them without paying for a special Imperial firman and protection; but when I got to Adrianople I found that I could go freely into equally fine mosques there. I was even told that I need not take off my shoes, though in this and other respects I like to conform to the manners of the country where I am, and did not take advantage of that permission. I was satisfied, however, that as regards the mosques the fanaticism is merely a pretext to make travellers pay, which disappears where there are too few travellers to support such a system.

This much, however, I think likely enough—and it may be the explanation of the difference of opinion regarding the fanaticism of the Turks—that being

descendants of peoples of Asia Minor who had strongly developed the religious character, they too may be earnest and strong in their religious feelings, and not of that class on whom religion sits very lightly. If so, they may be quiet and good men, and yet very sensitive on religious subjects. Possibly it is so.

I am the more inclined to think that the Turks derive some of their religion and manner of thinking from non-Mahommedan sources, because they have some popular beliefs or prejudices which I do not remember to have heard of among other Mahommedans, and which more resemble the ideas of some Hindoos, especially those of Western India. The Turks have that tenderness for animal life with which we are familiar in India. The dogs of Constantinople are sacred, and may not be killed, though they were once taken to a desert island and left there to starve. It is said, I do not know with what truth, that even small domestic vermin are sacred, and that this is why they so much abound in Turkey. Human life only seems to be not at all sacred, as is likewise the case in India. In fact, several of their practices and ideas remind one of those of Hindoos or fire-worshippers, and I suspect they must have got them with their blood from West Asian sources, neither Arab nor Turkish.

The Turks are apparently not so much divided into religious sects as some Mahommedan nations, yet a considerable variety of sects is not wanting among

them. In some parts of the country some of them have adopted tenets allied to those of the Sheeas, and are called Kuzzilbashes. The large class of Dervishes have tenets of their own, not more bigoted, as we might have expected, but much more liberal, than those of the ordinary Mohammedans, and almost semi-Christian. A sort of freemasonry, involving special views, has, I am told, taken a good deal of root among the Turks. In Syria, Arabia, and other countries not ethnically Turk, though under Turkish suzerainty, there are, as is well known, very many sects, but to these I need not allude.

All that I have said in favour of the personal character of the Turks is not inconsistent with much misconduct on their part, when they are the instruments of misgovernment, and are themselves in a false position, pressed by poverty and with much just grievance. In India men of most orderly, respectable classes, who make excellent soldiers, can be unpleasant enough even as the instruments of a government trying to be just—much more when they serve a bad, disorganised, and oppressive government. It will soon be shown that the Turks are really themselves in a very hard and trying position.

Coming, then, to the social position and condition of the Turks, I have been anxious to know whether in their own country they form village-communities of freemen administering to some degree their own affairs, as do the better class of Indian villagers; for that I

believe to be the situation in which men not very far advanced in modern appliances and luxuries are seen to the best advantage. This, however, I have not been able to discover. From any allusions I can find and inquiries I can make it would rather seem that even in Asia Minor, in the tracts with which Europeans are most familiar, they are not sufficiently indigenous or sufficiently Aryanised to have maintained or adopted this form, and that even there the feudal form prevails among them, as is almost always the case when conquerors rule over a subject race. In Europe it was certainly so. Strong Mahommedan rulers, who fully introduce their own laws, their ideas of the equality of subjects, and their repugnance to heredity, generally suppress feudal practices. The Mogul Emperors in the fulness of their power did so, and made settlements with the Ryots, regulating very exactly their liabilities to the Government, and protecting them so long as these were discharged. It was only in the decadence of their rule that *quasi*-feudal Zemeendars and Jagheerdars rose again into power. I have not traced the internal history of Turkey centuries back, and do not know if at any time Jannissaries and other regulars suppressed local chiefs; but in the times to which modern memory goes back the Government was certainly very much localised under Mahommedan Beys and Aghas, who maintained a feudal authority, and were often very troublesome to the Turkish Government, frequently

rebellling against it. In the greater part of the country Turks seem to have been settled on what we should call in India 'Jagheers,' that is, tracts of land of which the revenue was assigned to them in return for military service. A good deal of land they held and cultivated themselves in settlements, where the Turks were grouped round their chiefs, half cultivators and half soldiers. From the land held by the Christians they took revenue rather than rent, according to the well-known Eastern system, which gives the State or the superior a regulated share of the crop.

In these days the Christians occupied a very humiliating and degraded position; they were treated as altogether an inferior caste, and were denied many privileges. Yet they held their own lands and had a certain amount of self-government through their ecclesiastical and village chiefs. I apprehend that their position was scarcely so bad as that of the lower classes in many countries under the detestable system of bondage in which they were kept when the feudal system degenerated into extreme abuse. Probably they were a good deal better off than Russian serfs. They were more in the position of the Saxons under the Normans, or of the Irish under the English in the last century. It generally happens, too, that when local chiefs have occasion to rebel now and again it is necessary for them to keep their own subjects in good humour, lest they should have treachery in their

camp—and that is some safeguard against excessive oppression.

Some parts of the country the Turks proper never thoroughly acquired, and native chiefs accepting Mahommedanism became rather what would be called Zemeendars than Jagheerdars, indigenous superior landlords under the Turks. This was the case in Bosnia, while in Albania the chiefs exercised, I believe, a semi-independent authority. But I shall come to Bosnia afterwards. Meantime I deal with the country occupied by the proper Turks.

When Sultan Mahmoud carried out his reforms and became possessed of a regular army he put down the local Turkish Beys. They were almost wholly deprived of their positions and authority; the Turks were, with rare exceptions, reduced to the lands which they held, and were made to pay revenue for them like everyone else. So far a great measure of equality on the levelling-down principle was introduced.

At the same time it must be admitted that the removal of the excessive domination of the local Turks did effect a great improvement in the material condition of the Christians; they came to occupy relatively a much higher position, were relieved from many restrictions, and were enabled to make great advances in comfort, wealth, and property.

The improvement was, however, confined to their personal and material position; politically, they were



in no degree trusted. The power and executive government remained wholly with the dominant race; and latterly as the Christians improved in means and position, while the Turks were going down, an increased jealousy and apprehension of the Christians led to a more stringent and complete reservation of all power in Mahommedan hands. Not a Christian could be a soldier, nor a policeman, scarcely a village watchman. Every Mohammedan was armed: no Christian was allowed to bear arms.

Latterly the demands of the conscription on the Turkish population have been becoming heavier and heavier; and, ill-paid as the Turkish soldier is, this must be a terrible burden to him. I do believe that in this respect the Christians, paying a moderate tax in lieu of military service, are much better off. In truth I am convinced that it is really the case that of late years the Turks, deprived of their ancient privileges, subjected to the ill-regulated revenue demands of the State, and to the gross and increasing misgovernment of a despotic bureaucracy, drained of their manhood to supply an overgrown and underpaid army, and little competent to hold their own in peaceful arts against their rising neighbours, are in a very bad position, and becoming more and more discontented every day. No wonder that they are not in the best humour, and that they have been found ready enough instruments to plunder and to kill.

One of the few books which tells us of the people of European Turkey from personal knowledge is that of Messrs. St. Clair and Brophy. Mr. St. Clair seems to be an eccentric, extreme sort of person, and his pictures are evidently gross caricatures. He is an extreme lover of Turks and hater of Bulgarians, and attributes to the former every virtue under the sun, to the latter every vice. Yet, as in many caricatures, I gather that there is a good deal of truth at the bottom of some of his pictures, and in none more than in his account of the grievances of the common rural Turks. They really seem to be a good deal worse off than the Christians, going down while the latter are going up, becoming poor and indebted, while the Christians have been by comparison prospering—getting the best houses everywhere, making their land by industry the best, and no doubt, as happens under such circumstances, making a good deal of money at the expense of improvident debtors. I believe that the poor Turks have quite as much to gain by a reform of the government as the Christians.

Some of the upper class of Turks have still considerable lands—large farms, cultivated either by their Turkish followers or by Christian servants; but the whole style of thing struck me as generally untidy, and the cultivation indifferent. I doubt if these ‘Chifliks’ in such hands are often very profitable.

It is universally asserted that the Turkish population

is rapidly diminishing; that they are dying out, in fact. I was somewhat slow to believe this. Mahommedans are generally prolific enough, and the physique of the Turks is so fine as to show no signs of degeneracy. Poverty seldom leads to decrease of population so long as it does not reach starvation-point. I thought that the indubitable testimony to the rapid shrinking of the Turks in many places, both in Europe and the nearer parts of Asia, before the eyes of the present generation, their loss of the best quarters in the towns and the best seats in the market-place, might be rather due to their increasing poverty and material decline; that they might have withdrawn into more remote corners, rather than died out altogether; and I still think that a great part of their apparent decrease is probably due to that cause. But still there seems such a concurrence of opinion that the race itself is really decreasing, that I cannot doubt that more or less it is so. A prosperous polygamy requires a good supply of women, for when a few great people monopolise more than their share, unless there be an extraneous supply there are not enough for the lower men to have one wife apiece. Nowadays the Turks at large cannot afford to buy and import wives, nor could they get them by conquest till the other day they had some opportunity of helping themselves. I am told that very many of the Turkish soldiers and others are unmarried. There does seem to be a scarcity of women among them, which goes far to account for the proneness

to a summary treatment of the sex of which they are accused. And it is generally said that the Turkish women are far from prolific; that they very seldom have more than two or three children—for what reason I know not. It does seem as if the race were effete, and, more or less rapidly, dying out.

The upper classes of Turks are very much what we might expect, looking to the people from whom they spring. They have greater opportunities of obtaining Georgian and Circassian wives, and so far may have a somewhat more crossed and better blood; but, on the other hand, they are terribly subject to the evils of a harem education and Oriental vices. It is almost the rule in the East that the upper classes are by comparison very inferior to the lower classes. While the latter have many virtues, the former have so many corruptions and temptations that one can well understand how difficult it was and still is in the East for a rich or great man to enter the region of virtue. Yet the old-fashioned Turk of the dominant classes seems to have had as many good qualities as could be expected in his position. In him were found what I have called the manly virtues of a dominant race; he was brave, frank, hospitable, and sometimes not altogether a bad master.

Things have a good deal changed now. The old Turk has gone into the background; and the new-fashioned Turk, of which the latest development is the 'Young Turkey' party, is dominant.

The new Turk, with perhaps a good deal of foreign blood in his veins, is more clever and pushing than I have described the Turks generally to be. Yet I doubt if he is really very clever. Many of them have learned French; some of them have seen a good deal of Paris; they talk French well, and have caught a good deal of the French cleverness of style and expression. They have become by long practice thorough experts in one sort of diplomacy, in which Oriental duplicity is covered by European forms. Some of them may be capable of writing good despatches; but I fancy that in this respect they are more indebted to a set of clever French-educated Armenians and Greeks who hold a secondary place in their offices, and write clever despatches in French, which are done into Turkish and then re-translated into French for the edification of Europe. They have lost their ancient virtues, and those which they have gained are very superficial.

I was much disappointed by what I gathered of the education of the modern Turks. I expected to find a very large class corresponding to our educated natives in India. In truth, education is nothing like so common as in India, and what there is is of a character very inferior to that which we have introduced there. In all Mahommedan countries there is a smattering of Arabic education in connection with the mosques; but for the higher education there seems to have been almost nothing whatever done in Turkey, except the

military schools, to which great attention has undoubtedly been paid the last few years. The number of Turks who have learned French is not really great, though there may seem to be a good many, because they are conspicuous at Constantinople, in the official ranks, and in contact with Europeans; and the French education that they have is generally limited to the language and to picking up in Paris the manners and a good many of the vices to which young men are exposed there. Solid education, other than military, they seem to have got very little of. Although I do not think that the education we have given in India is by any means all that it should be—the literary element having hitherto prevailed over the practical and scientific—still that literary education has been thorough. The educated natives are very much imbued with ideas derived from the best English authors; and if these ideas seem somewhat to misfit them, it is because their language is too literary and their expressions somewhat stilted. They have not had the advantage of contact with the common life of Europe. The Turks have great advantage over them in this latter respect—they are undoubtedly more Europeanised in manner and expression, and perhaps to some extent in feeling; they are more men of the world, and the first impressions of them are probably more favourable. Yet I doubt if they have made so much real advance as the Hindoos. Among the natives of India we have turned out a great

many highly intellectual men, and a good supply of native doctors and engineers—that is more than the Turks have done.

One is surprised to find how many of the upper classes, how many of the dominant and official classes, are still wholly without the French veneer of education which some of them have; a very large proportion of them are wholly uneducated; certainly wholly without any modern and civilised education of any kind. A certain education of the press those who can read are now having. Before political events led to a very strict censorship considerable latitude seems to have been allowed to the native papers, and they appear to have a considerable circulation, in the principal cities at any rate.

Some of the Paris-educated Turks have brought back, as might have been expected, free-thinking ideas, and I fancy that views of that kind on religious subjects are prevalent in 'Young Turkey;' but open free-thinking does not seem to have become fashionable among them, so far as I can gather. In India the educated natives are almost universally, and quite openly, free-thinkers; but it is not so in Turkey.

I am sorry to say that, as in some other Oriental countries, it is found that education and drink are apt to go hand-in-hand. Drinking is too common a vice among the educated natives of India, and it is, I understand, the same among the Turks. Those who

dislike the Turks sometimes say it is a great mistake to call them sober—they drink as much as Christians. As regards the lower classes there is, I believe, no foundation for this assertion, but among the upper classes there is some ground for it, and the higher you go the more. Some distinguished Ministers have not been free from imputations of this kind, and two of the last three Sultans have drunk themselves off the throne.

On the whole, my impression of the modern and comparatively educated Turks is, that they have more vanity than practical energy, and more diplomatic knack than real talent. But they are pleasant and plausible, and have got rid of Oriental show and rag-tag, and very successfully conformed to European taste in these things. There is a simplicity about the personal habits and surroundings of the higher-placed Turks which is very pleasing to those who are accustomed to the swaggering surroundings of a great man in the farther East.

Of the whole Turkish people I may say that they have seemed to me more like natives of India than I expected. While their physique equals or excels that of the very best Indian races, and is decidedly superior to any general Indian population, they are inferior in agriculture, in commerce, and in energy to the natives of the Punjab. They are, I should say, inferior to the Bengalees in intellect and education, and not superior to them in practical energy. Perhaps they might



be likened to a sort of cross between Punjabees and the higher castes of Bengalees, with a whiter skin and somewhat robuster frame. If it be thought that this comparison of a white race to a dark one hardly does justice to the former, I would put it in this way: the Punjabee is, I should think, at least equal to the Egyptian in every way, probably superior; those who know best say that the Turk is from an industrial point of view decidedly inferior to the Egyptian; *ergo*, the Turk is inferior to the Punjabee. But the Punjabees are an exceedingly fine race, brave and energetic, and excellent subjects at the same time; so I may say this without contradicting the favourable opinion I have expressed of the mass of the Turkish people.

In the chapter on the races of Turkey I have briefly noticed the general character and social position of the other Mahommedan races; and I shall not enlarge upon them here.

Before coming to the separate Christian races, I must again revert to the personal government through ecclesiastical superiors to which I have already made brief allusion. The Mahommedan system being theocratic, it seemed to the Turks that, when they desired to give a certain management of their own affairs to the subject races, and to establish responsible authorities through whom they might be managed, the proper thing was to do all this through the religious heads of

the different persuasions—and we know very well that in times past Christian ecclesiastics have been ready enough to assume civil authority. Accordingly this ecclesiastical civil government of the Christians has always been a part of the Turkish system, the jurisdictions being not local but personal. Thus the affairs of the Armenians, whether in Constantinople or Asia, so far as they related to Armenians only, were managed through the Armenian Patriarch and his subordinates; so with regard to the Greeks, and so with regard to some minor sects. But there was one very important feature of this system which has much affected the relations of the Christians in Turkey. The Bulgarians, though ethnically entirely different from the Greeks, belonged to the Greek Church. The Turks, not being well up in ethnology, treated them as Greeks, and so it came to pass that the Greek ecclesiastics obtained not only the ecclesiastical control over the Bulgarians, but also the educational control, and that civil jurisdiction over them which was allowed to the superiors of the subject races. There was absolutely no education but that given under this ecclesiastical control; and, as the Bulgarian language is very different from the Greek, and has no near affinities to it, the lower classes of Bulgarians neither understood the language used in their churches nor got any education whatever; while the more well-to-do classes got only a Greek education. This was the case till very recently indeed. I asked a

Bulgarian lady if she understood Greek. 'Why, yes,' she said, 'I was educated in Greek; I could be educated in nothing else.' Since their partial emancipation from the rule of the Beys the Bulgarians have been making great material progress, and they not unnaturally rebelled against this state of things. They had come into contact with the Russians during previous wars when the latter invaded Turkey; and the Russians, considering them as fellow-Slavs, are understood to have assisted them in their attempt to obtain emancipation from the social dominion of the Greeks, to have exercised influence in their favour at Constantinople, and to have sought to unite them to the Russian Church. At any rate the Russians supplied Slavonic books and gave a Slavonic education to Bulgarian priests and schoolmasters. A few years ago—so lately as 1870, I think—the Turks conceded to the Bulgarians a separate ecclesiastical autonomy of their own, taking care that they should not be united to Russia, but put under a local Bulgarian Exarch. Thus for the first time the great Bulgarian population were recognised as occupying the position to which they had so just a claim; and they have developed with great rapidity and earnestness, making very rapid advances. But their rebellion against and separation from the Greeks have caused a very bitter feeling between the two races, which much affects the present situation, and which it is very important to take account of.

I have already noticed the distribution of the Greeks, their prominence in the towns, and their occupation of some of the country districts. Their agricultural villages in Roumelia have much the same constitution and character as those of the Bulgarians, which I shall afterwards notice, so I shall not here dwell upon them. They seem more given to garden and other fine cultivation than to very large agriculture, while the Bulgarians are more farmers. I liked what I saw of the rural Greeks. They seemed pleasant good sort of people, with considerable capacity for self-government, and their villages were very like Indian villages of a good class, *plus* a church. There does not seem to be any aristocracy among them, only the usual elders of the village-communes. In Epirus and Thessaly the villages are, I believe, stronger and more independent.

The town-Greeks have, as is well known, a large share of the trade and commerce of Turkey. They have also a good share of those purely civil offices in which the Turks think it well to employ the talents of the subject races in such a way that they can obtain no executive power or political position. The feelings of the more well-to-do Greeks are, of course, now much coloured by independent Greece; there they go for education, and they begin to consider themselves rather true Greeks living in Turkey than Rayahs. In common with the Greeks of Greece, they look to the day when events may unite them to Greece, or Greece to them.

The Bulgarians are, as already stated, by far the most numerous and important people in European Turkey—besides occupying the most central and most important position—a solid, steady, laborious, improving people, rapidly rising into greater and greater importance. Mr. St. Clair, while caricaturing many features of their character, in one principal point does not caricature them, but represents them in a light the very opposite of the truth; for he makes them out to be incorrigibly idle, whereas regarding their industry, the goodness of their agriculture, and their thrifty improving condition, all other witnesses are entirely agreed. There can be no doubt or question on that point. It is evident to the eye that they are good and thriving cultivators, judged by an Eastern standard. Possibly the mixed race on the coast of the Black Sea (called Gagaous), with whom Mr. St. Clair was chiefly in contact, may be so inferior as to give some colour to his prejudices; but the Bulgarians of the heart of the country, where I saw them, are certainly possessed of many rural virtues. The small Bulgarian towns are surprisingly good. Those which were lately destroyed were evidently solid, substantially-built, prosperous towns, not at all what we imagine an Eastern village to be.

The Bulgarians have no aristocracy—the Turks seem to have rid them of anything of that kind; but there is in the towns very sufficient evidence that they are abundantly capable of liberal education and de-

velopment. There are very many Bulgarian merchants and professional men who are just as intelligent and successful as those of any other European nation. They by no means yield these occupations to the Greeks in their own country. The only wonder is that, being so completely debarred from education in their own language till quite the other day, and having so little facility of obtaining education of any kind, they are already so advanced as they are.

Although they have so good a position in commerce and the professions, they have not, like the Greeks, any share of the civil offices of the Government. They justly complain that while a good many Greeks have places in their country, they have none, not counting the unpaid consultative councils, to which we shall come presently.

The Bulgarians seem to be certainly an increasing people, and if the Turks are diminishing, the Bulgarians are quite taking their place.

Long subjection to the Turks rendered them for ages more submissive than some other races, and perhaps on that account their relations with the dominant race seem to have been at one time more friendly; not, politically aspiring, they the better multiplied and attained some material comfort. It is only in comparatively recent times that they have advanced so far as to alarm the Turks and create a jealous antagonism of races. Now they have strong political and national

aspirations, not only the educated few, but the rural peasant, of whose eternal sameness of patriotic songs Mr. St. Clair gives an amusing account. Yet they have not the excess of national vanity and ambition (sometimes lightly put on and lightly thrown off) which seems to distinguish some of the purer Slav races; they are not so easily moved as the Servians. I doubt if they are very enthusiastic Slavs as regards Panslavism and that sort of thing; they are a very practical people, who wish to have Bulgaria for the Bulgarians, and will very gladly receive assistance from any of the allied Slav races who will assist them. They do not seem to be particularly fond of Russia; but they have a good deal of that sort of gratitude towards Russia which consists in a lively hope of favours to come. At the same time they know enough of the Russian system not to desire to have it too near.

They are probably a good deal influenced by the new liberal ideas prevailing in Russia. They have made astonishing and most successful efforts to educate themselves since they have separated from the Greeks. Where schools were scarcely known they are now numerous. In the absence of the means of indigenous education, they have sought and obtained much aid from Russia; many of the schoolmasters have been educated there, and have become apostles of new and to some extent revolutionary ideas; though in a country where there is no aristocracy to upset—and great equality prevails

among Bulgarians—these ideas of revolution go little beyond aspirations for freedom from an alien rule.

Where Bulgarians live in mixed towns and villages they necessarily occupy a subordinate position, as things are now arranged; but in the many places which are purely Bulgarian they have had some little village freedom under the Turkish administration. In considerable places there is a regular Turkish ‘Mudir,’ or petty governor, with his staff of Mahomedan policemen, and there there is not much room for self-government; the best that can be said of these places is, that they have not many tyrants over them. But in the villages where there are no ‘Mudirs,’ there is some degree of local self-government, though it is not organised in so complete and independent a fashion as in some parts of India. You do not see walled villages, such as used to be so common in the Sikh territories, where in former days the villagers not only were very ready to defend themselves against predatory incursions, but could often hold their own against the Government, make their own bargains, and pay their revenue over the wall, without admitting an official. The want of strong positions in the hills, which I have before mentioned, also materially affected the position of the Christian Bulgarians and made them less independent.

The old village system seems to have been very like that prevailing in the less independent villages in India. There were one or two notables, called Tchorbadjees, a



sort of village heads, irregularly elected by a sort of rough principle of natural selection, with the approval of the Government, and whose offices sometimes to some degree went in families so far as to give a sort of preferential claim to men otherwise eligible. And these had a sort of council of minor notables or elders, to assist them. Under the highly systematic and Frenchified system in which everything in Turkey is now supposed to be put the headmen are called 'Mooktars,' and both they and the elders are to be regularly elected by all Ottoman subjects of eighteen years and upwards having 'interests' in the commune, and paying fifty piastres of direct revenue; while the elected must be thirty years of age and pay 100 piastres. There are to be Electoral Colleges, annual elections, and all the rest of it, and the elected members, together with the religious heads of the several communities, form the Village Council. It is not surprising that all this is very much a sham, and that things go on much as before. I found an arrangement more complicated which I could not quite understand. Instead of two Tchorbadjees under the old system, or two Mooktars under the new law, there seemed generally to be one Mooktar, who in some sort represented the Government for revenue purposes; and one Tchorbadjee, who seemed to represent the people and to be made responsible in police and other matters. I heard something of some new law, which is not in my printed collection, but I confess I could

not make it out very clearly, and it is not important, for the general effect is the same as of old. When I inquired of the reality of the functions of the village officials, I got answers which reminded me of one I once got on a similar occasion in Cashmere, where the people are clever but wanting in courage, and the officials are rapacious. 'Are you headman of the village?' I said to a man. 'Well,' he replied, 'if anyone is to be beaten, I am the man; if you call that headman, so I am.' The Bulgarian headmen whom I questioned shrugged their shoulders expressively, put their hands in their pockets (they principally differ from Indians in having pockets to their trousers), and expressed themselves to a very similar effect. Still I believe that in times of peace and quietness they were not so very badly off, and did more or less manage their own affairs.

There is another village official whose title and functions reminded me of India—the village watchman. There was a time when these watchmen were really indigenous guardians, and the villagers selected their own Christian fellow-villager; so that to this very lowest form of executive authority the Christians were eligible. But as the Government became more and more centralised, and authority was more and more jealously monopolised by the Mahommedans, the villagers were very generally obliged to accept a Mahommedan watchman. From a servant he was too apt to become a master; a process which, I fear, we have not unfre-

quently adopted in India, when in a too organising spirit we have substituted an ill-paid policeman for the ancient watchman. Here he was in Bulgaria, with his brass badge and his spear, and his prominence when one goes into a village, exactly as in the district of a smart reforming magistrate in India. I learned that in some though rare villages a Christian watchman had survived up to the time of the recent disturbances. Now these are done away with, and I generally found a Turk from the nearest town established as watchman—a man with pistols in his girdle, a pony, and an air of authority quite superior to a mere village servant. ‘Is the watchman under your orders?’ I said to a headman. ‘Oh, yes, he is,’ he replied; ‘and he is a very good man: he does not do us the least bit of injustice!’ The watchman was present, and I thought it pretty plain which was master.

There remains Bosnia. The condition of things there is quite different from Bulgaria. I did not visit the Province, and cannot give details, but the general facts may be gathered from the reports as well as from any inquiries I could make. What may be called a ‘Zemendaree’ system prevailed there. The great feudal lords turning Mahommedans, with their immediate followers, were maintained in their dominions, and the people were not only Ryots but serfs. When the Turkish Beys were broken the indigenous Aghas of the more distant provinces remained. But they

seem to have been repeatedly troublesome to the Government, and were to a considerable extent reduced. The serfs were emancipated by the authority of the Government in 1851, but agrarian troubles and difficulties followed which are not yet solved. It is, then, an agrarian question between landlord and tenant which has caused the troubles in Bosnia, and this is of course very much aggravated by the difference of religion, just as was the case in Ireland. We must fully bear in mind the very great difference between the Bosnian and the Bulgarian question; the one being mainly agrarian, while the Bulgarians have little agrarian complaint (except abuses in the collection of the revenue), and have only political grievances and disabilities.

Englishmen do not well understand these agrarian questions as they occur in countries so different from England; and these Bosnian difficulties are not very clearly explained in our reports. But Count Andrassy, who is nearer and more accustomed to these questions, and who at the same time is not likely to be prejudiced in favour of Slavs or against aristocrats, states the matter very succinctly and clearly in his famous Note. He says:—‘After the suppression of the first insurrection of the Bosnian Beys in 1851 slavery was abolished; but, as often happens in such cases, this measure, instead of alleviating the condition of the peasants, has only aggravated it. They are no longer treated with the

same consideration as before. Nowadays there are only two antagonistic interests, and two religions face to face. From the moment when the disappearance of the feudal system effected the transformation of the former serfs into farmers (or "métayers") the outrageous practices of the landlords provoked numerous general or partial outbreaks.' Mark the words 'As often happens in such cases'—that is most true. The mistake is one to which we are very prone. We should have made it in Ireland if the blunderbuss had not preserved the customary rights of the Irish tenants till a more liberal policy prevailed; and we have made it in India when the oscillations of policy in that country have swung to one side of the great land question. It was not so much so in the days of Cornwallis, for he, so far as the laws go, prescribed the most ample protection for the Ryot. But in later days, when ideas of landlordism, political economy, and the laws of supply and demand in dealing with land were rampant, we have done just what Count Andrassy depicts. In our latest considerable acquisition, Oude, we did what was done in Bosnia. After annexing the country, on account of the failure of the king to restrain the tyranny of the Talookdars, we turned the Talookdars into landlords, the Ryots into tenants, and looked for most happy results from this 'great experiment;' whereas, as in Bosnia so in Oude, that very rich province has ever since been the most uneasy and unprosperous in the Indian Empire.

The Austrians then understand, if we do not, the real character of the Bosnian difficulty. It is one which has occurred and has been dealt with in many countries of Europe, and I need not here farther enlarge upon it.

A word I must say regarding the social position of the Armenians in Turkey. Their relations to the Turks are very peculiar. An acute Asiatic race, allied, I apprehend, to the Persians, their situation exposed them to very early conquest; and yet, when weaker and less intellectual people yielded to the religion of the conquerors, they resisted Mahommedanism and retained their own religion, just as did the higher castes in Cashmere, Bengal, and other Indian provinces, when the inferior races were converted. But, holding their own in religion, they also, like Bramins in India, did not sacrifice themselves by resistance in arms, but sought to make the best of the situation—to conquer the conquerors by superior intellect. They became the bankers, the merchants, and the penmen and political mouth-piece of the Turks, just as Cashmere pundits, acute Punjabee Khatrees, and Marratta Bramins have fulfilled similar functions. That is to a great degree their position to this day. When the Turks reached Europe the Greeks came into commercial competition with the Armenians, and Constantinople is now for commercial purposes divided between the two races. But, as the political assistants of the Turks, the Armenians are still much more prominent and much more trusted. The offices are full

of Armenians. They have affected a good deal of the Turkish dress and style, and are said to have imitated the Turks. It is difficult for a stranger in Constantinople to tell one from the other. Whether things may be changed if the Armenians in Asia catch the infection of reform, and begin to clamour for the amelioration of their condition, remains to be seen. The unfortunate Armenian editors who lately tried that sort of thing in Constantinople very soon learned that it was not tolerated there, and were at once suppressed and deported. However, up to the present the Armenians fill many high civil offices under the Turks; are well known in their foreign missions; and, acquiring much literary skill, write diplomatic despatches at home. I understand that the large banking and money business too is still much more in the hands of Armenians and Jews than of Greeks; the latter are rather enterprising merchants than capitalists.

A good many Levantines and foreigners are also in the civil service of the Turks, though Christians seem never to be admitted to the highest offices of all, foreign embassies excepted. The Turks seem always to maintain very jealously the exclusion of Christians from the army and navy, and all functions which involve the control of any sort of physical force. They have admitted very few unconverted European officers, and these only when required temporarily for special purposes—artillery and naval instructors, engineers,

and the like. I do not think they have now any Christian officer in the army, and in the navy only one English officer, who is more Turkish than the Turks. Hatti-Humayooms and what not have over and over again promised that Christians should be admitted to the military schools, and through them to the position of officers in the army ; but ‘ circumstances ’ have always prevented the fulfilment of these promises. The practice is still maintained inviolate that the physical force of the Empire in all grades, military and civil, is kept in the hands of Mahommedans alone.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT.

IN dealing with the social relations of the people I have in some degree explained how far they are employed in the Government service, and need not repeat so much in this chapter. The description of the character and relations of the upper and lower classes must also be borne in mind as a key to the situation. And I have briefly stated some portions of the history of the Government, mentioning how a *quasi*-feudal system has given way to a centralised Government and regular army, and how the relative positions of the various races have been affected by the change. In my account of the Mahommedan religion I have tried to explain its connection with Mahommedan laws and Mahommedan government, and how the power of the ruler is or ought to be limited by the laws. Also, how the Sultans, tolerating their Christian subjects, gave the various Christian communities, grouped according to religion rather than to locality, a certain measure of self-government in their own peculiar affairs. Also, how far there has been some trace of

local self-government in villages. Thus then we are brought to the modern Turkish Government.

I have expressed the belief that the earlier reforms of Sultan Mahmoud's time really did much to improve the condition of the Christians. There is a certain touch of humility and earnestness in the tone of the Hatti-Sheriff of Gulhane of 1839, and vague though it be, it was not altogether a dead letter. I do not take the Crimean war as the date of reaction and decline, attributing the evil to the policy of those times. I have not sufficiently studied the affairs of that period. But be the cause what it may, I think it is now apparent that things have altered very much for the worse during the last twenty years, and that far from the position of the Christians being improved by the fine promises of the Hatti-Hamayoom of 1856, and the Frenchified constitution which followed, it has very much deteriorated. The Sultan, released from the control of the laws of his own faith, and encouraged to borrow vast sums of money which he has spent recklessly, has become more and more a despot of the very worst type, combining all the vices of Asia and Europe. The bureaucracy which has succeeded to the *régime* of the old Turks has become more and more corrupt, unstable and intolerable: more and more it has been thought necessary jealously to keep down the rising aspirations of the Christians; and while formerly there were some local franchises in particular parts of the

country, and a little village freedom, these have been suppressed by a centralising system. Military power was always in the hands of the Turks, but there was little regular police; and the villages had the village police a good deal in their own hands: now there is a great police force exclusively Mahomedan, dominating every petty town and every part of the country, and there is not a village watchman who is not a member of the dominant Mahomedan force. Where formerly the Christians had only their Turkish rulers to fear, now they are further overawed and plundered by colonised garrisons of Circassians and other foreigners. Of the two hundred millions sterling borrowed from Europe a large part has gone to the financiers who raised the loans, and a large part to the gross personal extravagances of the Sultan; the part really spent for the purposes of the Government has been solely devoted to the army, navy, and military material and appliances. No doubt the army has been in some respects much improved; the men and material are excellent, only decent officers are wanting, and these great efforts have recently been made to provide through the military schools. The ironclad fleet is the finest in Europe, of the last new pattern but one, the newest type of the *Devastation* class is wanting—but the broadside ships are, I am told, better than ours. Though most of the ships and their crews have not left the waters of Constantinople, I believe that in those which have been

employed, under an English officer, to suppress the attempts of the Cretan Christians to recover their liberty and to overawe the Greeks, the Turks have proved themselves better sailors than might have been expected. Everywhere, after the Palaces of the Sultan and his enriched bureaucracy, the only conspicuous results of the borrowed money are great barracks and a few military schools. So long as the money from abroad came in freely and interest was handsomely paid out of capital, all went to the outside view merrily enough, though all was rottenness and corruption within. But this process could not last for ever, and the increasing necessity of finding the means to carry on an extravagant system, and pay an extravagant interest at the same time, led to financial difficulties and to harsh squeezing in the provinces, and eventuated in rebellion and collapse. Such is, in brief, the recent history of the Turkish Government.

As is well known, Russia was after the Crimean war deprived of the sort of Protectorate which she had previously exercised over the Christians in Turkey, and that duty was supposed to be in some degree undertaken by the other European Powers. We have been unfortunate in the Ambassadors who succeeded Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and as a nation we seem to have been content not at all to trouble ourselves about the fate of the Christians. It was enough for us that we thought we had set the Turkish Government on its legs, im-

proved its military power, and kept it going for our own selfish objects. No doubt, being ill served by the Ambassadors, we knew little of what was going on within Turkey. Those also who took a political interest in the subject thought only of India, and of keeping out the Russians; and so long as Sultan Azeez allowed our financiers to obtain large plums and paid 10 or 12 per cent. to our ordinary investors, he seemed, to the British plutocracy quite a model sovereign. The sound and true British public was entirely ignorant, as was to be expected they must be, when no one informed them of what was passing in a country which travellers have almost wholly avoided.

The French were not quite so neglectful of the internal affairs of Turkey. The Emperor Napoleon seems to have sincerely considered that he had a mission to set the world right, and to protect the oppressed everywhere, except, perhaps, in France. The French Ambassador at Constantinople did continue to urge reforms on the Porte. And he was in one sense gratified. Paper reforms were abundantly granted, and they were all framed on a French model, or perhaps I may rather say, caricatured French models. Reading over the Turkish ordinances, one is inclined to suppose that some French Constitution-monger who carried his political refinements too far for acceptance in his own country had betaken himself to Turkey and placed his services at the disposal of the

Turkish Government. There are so many gradations of authority, such requirements of direct and indirect election and selection, and all the rest of it, that one hardly can imagine them in any degree the work of any Turkish *Sièyes*, unless it be of an Armenian educated in Paris. The principal objection to these refinements is their extreme inapplicability to a country in the stage in which Turkey now is. And a main reason for distrusting any further Frenchified reforms and constitutions now offered by the Turks is, that they have given too much of that kind of thing already. If there were any reality in these paper constitutions, Turkey would be now one of the most admirably governed countries in the highest stage of political development in the whole world. If any one cares to read all these things, are they not written in the book of the '*Législation Ottomane*,' published at Constantinople, in French, in four volumes, by '*Aristarchi Bey*,' alias '*Grégoire*'? I have already noticed the beautiful constitution of the village-communes, with their annual elections and qualifications of all sorts. Above the commune there is the *caga* or canton. In the canton there is to be an electoral college, composed of officials, religious chiefs, and notables, who are to make a list of people of all classes who pay 150 piastres direct revenue, and can read and write, and are to select from among them a number of persons three times the number required for the Cantonal Council, of

whom half are Mussulman half non-Mussulman. These names are to be submitted to each commune, and the communes are to vote a number equal to double that required, that is, throwing out one-third of those already named. The votes are then counted by communes; and those elected by a majority of the communes are presented to the governor of the district, who selects half of them to be members of the council of the canton, of whom three are Mussulman and two non-Mussulman. The council consists altogether of the caïma-cam or lieutenant-governor, the chief secretary, the cadi, the mufti, the religious heads of the Christians, and the elected members. Such is the curiously complicated constitution of the smallest division of the country. And there are judicial tribunals formed in an equally complicated manner. It is only further to be observed, that even if an arrangement of this kind were fully carried out, it palpably enables the Mahomedan authorities to command their own majority. It is by no means liberal even on paper.

In the sandjak or district a council is constituted on similar principles, under a mutaserrif or governor, including a 'sub-director of the finances,' a 'director of correspondence,' cadi, mufti, spiritual chiefs, and four members indirectly elected, and in part selected, as in the cantons; of the latter, two Mussulman and two non-Mussulman. But the Mussulman officials make that element decidedly predominant.

In each province there is a similar council, under the Walee or governor-general, consisting of the chief of the magistracy, the director of the finances, the director of correspondence, the director of foreign affairs (it seems that each province has its foreign department), and four members elected by a process similar to that in the inferior divisions, two Mussulman and two non-Mussulman.

Not only is this constitution far too complicated, not only is it in practice almost wholly a sham, not only, if really administered, does it leave the real power with the Government,—but there is this also to be observed, that the law is remarkably obscure as to the functions of the councils in administrative affairs. There is an over-elaboration and care as respects the election and constitution of the councils, but very little in regard to their functions. The Council of the Province is to ‘study’ all sorts of administrative affairs, and may make presentments to the governor. The minor councils are to ‘watch over’ the administration in various particulars, and that is about all. These councils are, in fact, neither more nor less than mere consultative councils—and very little consulted I believe they are. There is, however, somewhat more reality, I understand, in the mixed tribunals for the administration of justice, each of which comprises certain members elected in a similar manner to those of the administrative councils. There is this too to be said that, in the affairs of the world



you not unfrequently commence with shams which may afterwards be turned into realities. And I am inclined to think that the presence of members of the community in the administrative councils and the mixed tribunals, such as they are, has gone some way towards preparing the ground for real local government.

The Bulgarians complain, apparently with justice, that under the system by which each religious sect is represented, they have not a fair share. In districts where they are the immense majority and the Greeks a very small minority, they say that not only have the Greeks some of the inferior offices and they none, but the Greeks are equally represented in the councils, there being one religious head for each, and the authorities insisting in practice that there should be one of the two Christians lay members for each community.

The pretended councils apart, the form of the civil administration is very like ours in India. The 'Walees' of the provinces are in dignity and appointment on the footing of our provincial governors; but their charges are really about equal to those of our Indian commissioners of division. Under them the mutasarrifs correspond to Indian magistrate-collectors of districts (the Turkish district being usually not quite so large), and the Caimakams to the officers in charge of subdivisions, to deputy magistrates or tehseeldars. There is now a regular police force in every district and subdivision, under heads of police very like ours, and the

village watchmen with their brass badges are just like ours in India, but the whole police force being, as I have already stated, exclusively Mussulman. As we have lately seen, too, the whole Mahommedan population, accustomed as they are to the use of arms, can be turned into a local militia of 'Bashi-Bazooks' when required, while the Christians are not allowed to bear arms. At the same time it must be admitted that the Turkish police being little efficient and the administration not so thorough (perhaps it may be said in ordinary times not to be so severe), as in some European countries, the Christians have a good many arms at home, rules to the contrary notwithstanding.

The judicial tribunals differ from those in India or England in being to some extent, theoretically at least, of a more popular character, in which elected members sit.

There are pure Mahommedan tribunals, for the affairs of the Mahommedans so far as they are regulated by Mahommedan law alone, and in these the Mahommedan law of evidence prevails. The only serious ground of complaint on this subject is, that under the peculiar land laws the mosques are supposed to have certain reversionary interests in most of the land, which is, on that ground, called 'Wakoof,' and brought under the jurisdiction of the *quasi*-ecclesiastical courts. The land laws are very complicated. To tell the truth, I was not able thoroughly to understand them. But I am glad to learn from Sir Henry Maine that some of the

points which puzzled me have attracted his attention, and that he believes they can be historically explained. It is certainly most necessary that in land cases Christian evidence should be fully admitted.

The tribunals of Mahommedan law apart, other matters affecting the general community are or ought to be dealt with by the mixed tribunals and tribunals of commerce. Each province, district, and subdivision has a mixed tribunal, presided over by a Mahommedan judge. He is assisted by three Mahommedan and three non-Mahommedan members. In each province and district there is, further, or according to the law ought to be, a 'Tribunal of Commerce,' constituted after a French model. These tribunals look well on paper, but it seems universally agreed that the courts of justice are altogether very corrupt and bad in practice. The real power lies chiefly with the Mahommedan lawyer, who presides, and, all rules notwithstanding, he is too apt to give effect to his own prejudices regarding rules of evidence, &c. Some good the mixed members probably do, but they are said to be too often selected for subserviency to the Turkish officials, and too frequently to content themselves with certain advantages for themselves and those nearest to them.

The Turkish Revenue system seems to have been till recently rather irritating than very severe. The tithe of the crop, even when to meet modern necessities it is increased to an eighth, is a very moderate

share compared to that to which we are accustomed in India; but the abuses connected with the system of collection are very great. The farming of the tithes to speculators, the delay over and quarrels about the division of the crops, the loss from exposure and pilfering during the process, the arbitrary power of the official or tithe-farmer to hold over the division almost indefinitely when he wishes to impose terms on the cultivators, the corruption and rapacity of the minor officials, all these are complaints made in Turkey and with which I am thoroughly familiar in India, when I have taken over territory from native States, as well as in our own territories in parts of the country where great landlords habitually farm out their dues to speculators, as is usually the case under that system. The Turkish Government have repeatedly promised to commute the Government share of the produce for a settled system, as we have done in India wherever we have the power, but they have not yet in any degree effected this in any part of the country. To make up for the lightness of the share of the produce prescribed by the Mahommedan law, there is another direct tax, a sort of income-tax, roughly assessed on each village and town, and then distributed by the local headmen. There are great complaints of inequalities in the imposition of this tax. The sheep, goats, &c., are also taxed. The composition in lieu of military service paid by the Christians is moderate enough in the

opinion of well-informed people. There are indirect taxes on salt, on spirituous liquors, and on tobacco. Then there is local taxation for local purposes. But I do not now go into details of the revenue system.

The Turkish civil administration again resembles ours in India in form, in that none of the higher officials are in any degree local, they are all members of a sort of centralised civil service, and sent from Constantinople now here, now there, all over the Empire. I shall come presently to this bureaucratic service, and the system of recruitment, promotion, and corruption which prevails in it; for that, in fact, is the real evil by which a system not bad in theory is turned in practice into execrable misgovernment.

First, however, I must glance at the provinces, where, without complete autonomy, certain concessions have been made under the influence of the Christian Powers. I have alluded to old local franchises before existing—there were several such in different parts of the country which have now disappeared, and I do not stop to attempt to trace their history. The island of Samos has still a constitution. I will not go into that, but pass on to the Lebanon and Crete, both of which have received new constitutions in recent years. The Lebanon arrangement works well, I believe, having been, in the first instance, after the Lebanon massacres, fairly started under the material guarantee of a French military force, and being administered by

a very good Christian governor, whom the Porte has no power to remove for a term of years. He has a local militia or armed police to keep order, Turkish troops not being allowed: and under him a very successful system of local administration is established; each village and canton administering its own local affairs, through elected officers of their own. The mixed cantons are administered by mixed committees, in which the different tribes and sects, Druse and Maronite, Greek and Catholic, and Metualee are represented, and the whole province is ruled under the governor by a representative body, to which all these sects send delegates. It seems to be a remarkable and almost unique instance of very discordant and previously hostile elements—Christians and Mahommedans of several sects—being united in one system of self-government. I suspect, however, that most of the success is due to the large power exercised by a good governor over all.

The Cretan constitution, given after the last rebellion, is more recent and less satisfactory. I can hardly understand how the Powers accepted it as satisfactory, for it seems to me that even on paper it puts the real power into the hands of the Mahommedans, supported and backed by the Turkish Government, although they are less than one-fourth of the population. True, half of the governors of districts are to be Christians, but the Porte selects them at pleasure; and in regard to the

cantons there is no such restriction, the caimakams are to be nominated at discretion, either Mussulman or Christian, and of course are principally Mussulman. So in the council of the Governor-General there are to be three Mussulman and three Christian members, but these latter are entirely outvoted by several Mahomedan *ex-officio* members; and in every district in which there are any Mahomedans the council is similarly constituted. The cantons are to be represented by delegates, Christians where the inhabitants are purely Christian, Mussulman where they are purely Mussulman, and where they are mixed there also the delegate is to be a Mussulman—a surprising provision, but so it appears in the official French ‘*enfin chaque kaza mixte sera représenté par un délégué Musulman.*’ However, this is of less importance than the real character of the executive administration. Are the Christians treated as free subjects, or altogether held in subjection? A traveller, who has strong pro-Turkish sympathies, and who wrote an account of a visit to Crete in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, thinks that the Christians have as much freedom as is consistent with the rule of the Turkish minority! And what is this freedom? I find that out of a police force of 2,800 men no less than 2,000 are foreign mercenaries, Mahomedan Albanians, a fierce garrison stationed in the island, in addition to a large regular force, to keep the Christians down. And on what are the Turks expend-

ing their energies? Here is the account given by the friendly eye-witness:—"Since the insurrection efficient means have been taken to put the Imperial forces on a footing to cope with any future troubles of the kind. Between the close of the insurrection and the present time about one hundred and fifty blockhouses have been built, commanding all the most important strategic points from one extremity of the island to the other. A systematic network of military roads now connects all these points, and it is the present object of the Government to make the more important of these roads also passable by field-pieces of large calibre. A complete system of signals is also maintained between the blockhouses, by which, in the event of the wires being cut, uninterrupted communication can be kept up from one end of the island to the other. Some interesting works in fortification are in progress, among which those of Fort Izzedin are the most important." The Powers stipulated for some liberal concessions to the Cretans in respect of taxation—the governor is said to be a good one—and between discrepant accounts of the administration, some representing it as very good, others as a mere sham, I should gather that it is not at present wholly bad. But it is, I think, evident that the Turks are straining their means to the utmost to put down any future rising, and keep the Christians in complete political subjection.



The Bureaucratic Oligarchy by which Turkey is now ruled, is one of the most singular and unique institutions that exists—different from anything that ever has existed, in its curious combination of Asiatic and European systems and evils. Formerly in Turkey, as in other Oriental countries, power was attained by that Darwinian system of natural selection, which no doubt has some advantages—the weaker went to the wall or to the bottom, and the strongest came to the top. Rulers and governors and administrators were generally strong men, who had fought their way up and could hold their own; if not, they speedily fell. Tyrannical and rapacious they most probably were, but still they had some vigour, and if they and their immediate followers took their fill of plunder, they often gave the people some protection from others, and sometimes had their own ideas of good government and the duties of their station. When, too, a man had sucked up the plunder of the State, generally his turn came and he was squeezed and forced to disgorge it again. Now we have changed all that. Turkish officials are no longer rough and successful soldiers who have their day of power and are then squeezed for the common good. All power is exercised by an oligarchic knot of 100 to 200 persons in Constantinople, and their *protégés* in the provinces—smooth and polite and plausible gentlemen they are—and if they make a great deal of money, they

are no longer squeezed when they fall—Turkey is too civilised for that; they keep it and spend it in a *quasi*-civilised manner in beautiful places on the Bosphorus.

The great mystery is, how a man enters this charmed circle: it is not education, many of them are exceedingly uneducated—it is not birth or rank, there is no hereditary rank in Turkey, and official rank is much less hereditary than we should expect it to be. It seems rather surprising that one does not hear more of literal nepotism in Turkey. Probably the family tie is not so strong as with us, and the Mahommedan system '*abhors heredity*,' as a lawyer might say. At any rate, the fact seems to be that there is rather an official than an actual heredity; a man rises to be a great man by being the servant, the understrapper, the favourite of great men. A little time back it was notorious that men got on the first round of the ladder by the basest functions in a great man's establishment. Now things may not be quite so bad, but it remains that an aspirant commences by being either a personal servant or a humble hanger-on; and all the offices and houses of great men are filled with such hangers-on. Probably, the successful men must have some talent of a sort to enable them to ingratiate themselves with their patrons; very often they seem to have little other talent. Such men certainly rise from much lower

positions than would be possible in this country, and with much less to recommend them. Still, in these days of contact with Europe, education has its advantages, and probably a young man who has learned French and Frenchified his manners has a considerable advantage. I saw somewhere an amusing account of how a young man of this sort rises by getting into debt: which reminded me of things that used to be alleged of young Indian civilians in times gone by, when native usurers were said to supply them very freely with money in their early days, in order to keep an obligation of debt over them—though I believe such cases were always rare. In Turkey, it is said, a likely young man goes to some Armenian or other usurer accustomed to such dealings, who has great men already in his power and holds a powerful machinery in his hands. If the applicant is thought to have good points for the Turkish stakes, he gets money and spends it in Frenchified pleasures; and when he is sufficiently secured by debt, he is introduced to the establishment of a great man and pushed on by his powerful patron behind the scenes.

I daresay there is a good deal of truth in stories of that kind. Certainly there can be no question of the advantages of getting into debt in some circumstances—the most conspicuous instance being the Sultan and Turkish Government itself. Not only have they had all the luxury of abundant money and

unlimited extravagance for a good many years; not only have they acquired the military means which have enabled them to put down their oppressed subjects, but they have raised up in their behalf an immensely powerful monied interest, which more than anything else has obtained for them certain kinds of support.

However, to return to the Bureaucracy, once started on the skirts of a great man, promotion goes entirely and absolutely by patronage and favouritism. A novice rises to favour about the person of a great man, gets sent to the provinces as an administrator to try to make his fortune there, goes through the ups and downs and the constant choppings and changings which are a part of the system; and, if he is successful, attains the great goal of ambition, office and power at Constantinople. For to the modern civilised Turk the provinces are more or less a banishment, and the highest officials there, apparently surrounded by the highest dignity, generally are but dependents of powerful patrons at Constantinople. Not only is there a constant struggle for fresh patronage among the leading men at the capital, but it seems that, under a Sultan who to some degree governed, the Palace got a large share of the plunder. Large *douceurs* were paid somewhere for every appointment; especially the mother of Sultan 'Azeez is said to have claimed a *douceur* before the Imperial

sign-manual was obtained. These payments, on appointment, are a great temptation to constant change; and constant change seems to have become a settled part of the system. No man remains long in any office in the provinces—it is a continual turn and turn about—as soon as one man has had his suck, another is put on, and his predecessor must seek a fresh appointment obtained by the usual means.

A few men, good by comparison at any rate, have obtained high office even under this system. There are, no doubt, a few less bad than the others who are brought to the front when the European Powers are particularly urgent. But it seems to be agreed on all hands that the great mass of the officials are as execrably bad as might be expected under such a system, and that corruption is altogether rampant. At the same time, it must be admitted that these evils are sometimes a good deal covered by a civilised exterior. Europe has had a humanising influence on the manners of the Turks. Their officials do not always exercise power in a very rough way. There is not, I gather in most cases, nearly so much police rule as in some countries of higher pretensions; it is rather quiet corruption, combined with extreme want of efficiency and incapacity to restrain subordinates, which is the root of the evil. I should say that many of the Turkish officials rather mean well than otherwise, so far as is consistent with the necessities of their position, being more decent men

than one might expect, rather timid and not inclined to do evil for evil's sake. What most struck me, both in Constantinople and the provinces, was the want of vigour which seemed to characterise the whole official hierarchy. The suppression of the Bulgarian rising is the only vigorous thing which has been done. For the rest, both in civil and military affairs, a timid red-tapism seems very much to prevail. In the very crisis of the fortunes of Turkey, when the position depended on the use of the great military means which they had accumulated, most inefficient men seem to have been sent to command their armies, selected according to a system of routine which would have been worthy of the worst days of the Horseguards. And in civil matters, the grand panacea for all ills in Turkey is the appointment of a 'Commission,'—whether it be to make an inquiry or to devise reforms in the system, or to carry out executive improvements, it is always a Commission, and the Commission works by Sub-Commissions and Sub-Sub-Commissions, till all chance of efficiency is frittered away.

The officials of the class of 'old Turks' if they want some modern improvements, and use more freely Oriental modes of administration, have often more regard to the restraints of their own religion and laws, and are in some respects a good deal more easy to deal with than the 'young Turkey' men. These old Turks feel that their time must come. They believe in the

prophecy or forecast that they must leave ~~Europe~~; sooner or later, and they are content to listen to advice and to stave off the evil day as long as possible. The young Turkey men have no such feeling; their knowledge of European languages and ways has led them to think that they are just as good as any and perhaps better; they are pretty free from religious or social trammels, and very well inclined to reform in their own way; they are determined not to give in, but wish to apply a large amount of eyewash to the Turkish administration, and then to carry on their own Bureaucratic rule more completely than ever. From all I could learn I doubt whether these men are very clever. I could not gather that there are now in the higher offices of the administration any men of at all striking ability. The only Turk I met in Constantinople who struck me as being extremely clever was a very well-known personage—well known in Europe as well as in Constantinople—who, after having held many high offices, has been placed in retirement on account of being too clever, and taking too much a line of his own. The most conspicuous man among the reforming party is Midhat Pasha. I am told and believe that he is not a man of much brilliancy of intellect. He is energetic, a very good executive administrator, and keen for reforms to an extreme. But he seems to be quite wanting in originality, and to take his ideas of reform somewhat servilely from French models. There

is an amusing account of him in the book of Mr. St. Clair, who lived under his government when he was 'Walee' of the Province of the Danube.

The Turks have a great reputation for diplomatic skill; and certainly they have been very successful in that way, yet I suspect that it is rather that by long practice in playing a particular game they have acquired a knack and mastery of it, and that their successes are rather due to the divisions and jealousies of Europe, than to their own cleverness. True, in playing their own particular game their despatches are clever and well-written. But I think their correspondence constantly betrays the Frenchified origin which I have attributed to it. I was reading the other day a paper supposed to be a translation of a Turkish document, with constant allusions to the 'mère-patrie,' and other expressions entirely inconsistent with Turkish ideas, and which seemed to me to make it palpable that it had been originally written in French by a man who had got both his language and his ideas in France. After all, diplomacy, in the professional sense, is a knack depending on practice: there are no better diplomatists in their own way than the Affghans—the tribes of the Khyber, who have diplomatised for blackmail from the days of Alexander to our own, play that game cleverly still.

In all the Turkish offices it is surprising to what an extent routine and red-tape prevail, and how dilatory



and inefficient they are in consequence. Their individual ministers have not the power that ours have. Everything must be referred to the Grand Vizier, who is the *alter ego* of the Sovereign and as such holds all power, before it can be finally passed, and the Grand Vizier is thus hopelessly over-worked. Our circumlocution offices are speed and efficiency itself compared to those of Turkey.

The position and influence of the Sultan himself in the Government depend entirely on the accident of his personal character. As in the case of other offices, so in that of the greatest, the deference to legitimacy of modern manners is far from an unmixed good. Formerly an incapable successor to the Sultan-ship could be put out of the way, and the choice of a Sovereign was regulated by some principle of natural selection. But when the succession devolves by legitimate rules, there is nothing but the average chance of the average man produced by a system of harem education and seclusion, more than any other that it is possible to conceive calculated to make him as bad as possible.

Abdul Medjid seems to have been very much given to drink. Abdul Azeez was, one may gather, pretty free from such vices; he appears to have had a good deal of character, and to have been for some purposes his own minister; he might have been a good deal above the average of such sovereigns. But unfortun-

ately his energies took such a direction that it would have been very much better if he had only been a drunken sot. The very reforms which the European Powers pressed on him necessarily severed him from the obligation to adhere to the old-fashioned laws of his own people and religion, and having so far emancipated himself, he seems to have gone in thoroughly for the idea of making himself a despotic Sovereign, on a European model, with a great army and fleet, and centralised administration and all the rest of it. Unfortunately, while freed from all the restraints of a Mahommedan Sovereign, he did not come under the civilised restraints and public opinion which now so much limit and control a European Sovereign, however despotic; he fancied that being despotic he might do as he liked, and in his personal habits was wholly Oriental. The idea was then prevalent that everything good was to be achieved by a free expenditure on improvements made with borrowed money, and English and other financiers rushed to the aid of a Sovereign who thoroughly accepted that view, so far as the free borrowing of money and its expenditure for his own purposes went. Probably he thought that he was doing his duty to his country in investing in iron-clads and military appliances. At the same time he carried his personal extravagances and caprices beyond all bounds; while the civil administration in the hands of the Bureaucracy and the Validè Sultan or Queen-

mother (the Sultan having no proper wives, the mother is always the first lady), went from bad to worse.

The Government of Sultan Azeez and his Bureaucracy seem really to have been the very model and perfection of bad government, and of injury and decadence to the country. The only advantage gained by Turkey was the expenditure, in the worst way, of a good deal of European money never repaid, and the creation of that financial interest in the maintenance of the Turkish Government, to which I have already alluded.

When things had come to their worst, and Abdul Azeez fell without a friend, as usual everyone said that the new Sovereign Mourad was to be a great improvement—all new Sultans always are everything that is good. It turned out that he was a hopeless drunkard, whose nerves were utterly gone before he was put on the throne, and who could not attempt to govern or even to reign. So for the short time that he was nominally on the throne the Bureaucracy reigned supreme. A change of ministry there had been, but such changes are only from one bureaucratic set to another. It was a reforming party that put Abdul Azeez and his ministers out, and it was a reforming party that came in; but in that reforming party there were very discordant elements. The Softas and Mahommedan party are not without enlightenment in their way. I believe that they are liberal for Ma-

hommedans, and would a good deal liberalise the Mahommedan laws. But still their idea is to reduce the Sultan's power within the limit of those laws; to make him a constitutional Mahommedan Sovereign according to Mahommedan laws and ideas. The new Grand Vizier principally represented this party. On the other hand, there is the more advanced Young Turkey party, headed by Midhat Pasha. They are probably very broad in their views, and very much emancipated from Mahommedan prejudices both religious and legal. They are, no doubt, willing to reform the Turkish Government on European models. But they will not brook interference; they think they can do it themselves, and their models are rather Napoleonic than really constitutional. Above all, they cling to a highly centralising system. Parliaments, Senates, and all, they would grant—and even Provincial Councils supposed to be of an improved character; but all power must be concentrated in Constantinople, all the official hierarchy must come from thence, they must themselves manage and control the machinery: under constitutional forms the Government must be more bureaucratic than ever. They want to play a game which requires great strength—under the circumstances of Turkey almost superhuman strength. If there were among them a man combining the talents of Napoleon I. and Napoleon III. and a few more like him to assist him, possibly they

might succeed for a time : in the hands of mere modern Turkish Pashas the thing is impossible.

The decentralisation and local government which is now suggested as the only real remedy for the existing state of Turkey is just what these reformers most abhor and avoid.

My own impression is, that the radical vice of the Turkish Government is not so much its wickedness as its inefficiency. In other respects its badness might possibly in some degree be reformed ; but the hopeless rottenness and inefficiency of the rotten bureaucratic Government of an effete people ruling over superior races is not to be cured. The only chance is to relieve it by a large decentralisation, and by giving as much self-government as possible to the races now subject.

It is difficult to learn much of the real character of a new Sultan. So far, however, as one can gather, I take it that the present Sultan is probably a tolerably good well-meaning sort of man—but his health very precarious, and his spirit hardly equal to his position. He is not likely by great individual achievements to retrieve the falling State.

I should say that the Turkish Government is as bad as it is possible to be, except in one particular, viz., that there being less severe police control, there is consequently in one way more personal freedom, than in some European States. That this is so is evident enough. There is a certain easy-goingness about the

Turkish administration, and a toleration not only of religions, but of newspaper correspondents and foreign inquirers, which is not to be found in some other countries. The local press is now subjected to a very vigorous censorship, and the Telegraph and other sources of intelligence are manipulated for the purposes of the Government (with foreign aid) in a manner that would do credit to the best-organised of foreign Bureaucracies ; but the system of political police does not go much deeper.

I formed the opinion, from reading carefully the various reports of our Consuls and agents, that, for the most part, the Christians are not so much maltreated as Christians, as that they suffer from bad government in common with the Mahommedans ; and that even where Mahommedans are the oppressors and Christians are the oppressed, it is rather a question of class against class, aggravated by difference of religion, than a difference originating in religion. And all that I have seen and heard since goes a good deal to confirm that opinion. But when we come to political rights and trusts, then I say that, at this moment, and now perhaps more than at any previous period of Turkish history, the Christians are placed in a humiliating and enthralled position which has had no parallel in the world. Think of a system under which no Christian can bear arms in any capacity, not even the bâton of a policeman, nor exercise any executive authority, even the pettiest,—under which not only

the whole army, but the whole executive administration, the whole police down to the village watchman, are all of the dominant Mahommedan minority, while the Christian majority are entirely and without exception a subject-people. Compare this state of things with the liberal government of the Mogul Emperors in India, where the Hindoos were employed in thousands and tens of thousands, both in the army and the civil administration, where many of the chief ministers were Hindoos, and where one of the Emperors even went so far as to appoint a Hindoo General to be Governor of Mahommedan Cabul. Compare it with the everyday and uncoerced practices of native States in India at this day. There is hardly a Hindoo State which has not many Mahommedans in its higher offices, and hardly a Mahommedan State which has not many Hindoos in similar offices.

Whatever then the material position of the Christians of Turkey, and however their sufferings from bad government may be more or less in particular provinces and under particular Pashas, it seems to me that they have everywhere a political grievance of the most crying and outrageous description. For the rest, it cannot be doubted, there is overwhelming concurrence of testimony to this: that under a most inefficient and corrupt Government and the extreme domination of an alien race, Christians were very frequently ill-treated and oppressed in an extreme degree. It is patent that they

were often outraged by Turks, and plundered by Circassians. Yet on the whole, considering the extreme badness of the situation, the excessive opportunities to impune outrage and oppression in the hands of a race themselves ill used, discontented and downgoing, the irritation natural to the attempt to cure one evil by another—the domination of the Turks by the abuses of ill-regulated Consular protection :—looking to all the circumstances, I must say, I think the wonder is not that there was so much outrage and plunder, but that there was not more. It is only because the Turks are not personally a very bad race that the case was not worse. But things were coming to a crisis. The tension between the races was increasing. The pot of discontent, oppression, and recrimination was ready to boil over. Everything was prepared for the events to which I shall devote the next chapter.



## CHAPTER V.

## RECENT EVENTS.

WHAT I have already said will have shown that in some respects I do not go quite so far as Mr. Gladstone. I do not think that the Turks are by nature inhuman monsters. I am sure when Mr. Gladstone proposed to drive the Turks out of Europe he merely meant, as he immediately explained, to drive away the Turkish Government; but his words are caught up, interested people pervert the original words and withhold the explanation: I heard them in Turkey even from good Turks, who, admitting the evils of their own Government, protested against being themselves driven away altogether. I venture to think, however, that the Duke of Argyll was wholly right in the view of the case which he laid before the people of Glasgow. I read that speech at the time, and I have read it since I returned from Turkey: I could not wish that a single word of it were withdrawn. I think, with the Duke, that the true view is, that a people striking

for freedom are entitled to our sympathy. It was, if I mistake not, Lord Derby himself who said that, although we have guaranteed the Turks against external aggression, we have not guaranteed them against internal commotion caused by their misgovernment of their own subjects. Why, then, should we not sympathise with those subjects in their attempt to gain freedom, and to throw off an alien and a tyrannical yoke? Surely no Englishman, in his senses, can seek to keep the Turkish Government on its legs for its own sake? Only because it is so difficult to find a substitute for that Government, in the possession of the territories over which it now rules, have we been unwilling to see its destruction. But if the subject people—the natives of the country—can achieve their freedom, and render themselves masters of their own country, why should they not have our best good wishes in doing so? I am entirely unable to understand on what ground an opposite view can be founded—why our Ambassador should have assumed that it is the policy of the British Government to obtain the suppression of the Turkish Christians seeking to gain their liberty. Count Andrassy is certainly not a witness hostile to the Turks—his own political prejudices would be all in favour of their maintenance, and his aristocratic prejudices would probably be in favour of the Turkish landlords rather than of the Turkish peasantry. Yet, nothing can be clearer than the way in which the

Count shows in his famous Note how real the grievances of the Christians are. It does seem most extraordinary that, in the face of those avowed grievances, Sir Henry Elliot, and the British Government, should have thought it right to encourage the Turks to suppress the rebellion by vigorous measures. Looking over the index to the Blue Book, I was struck with one laconic abstract of a despatch from Sir Henry Elliot, which is in these words:—‘Last accounts from Bosnia most satisfactory;’ and turning to the despatch itself, I find that Sir Henry’s satisfaction is, not that the grievances of the Christians have been redressed, but simply this: ‘The last accounts from the north of Bosnia are entirely satisfactory. Raschid Pasha says that the Austrian frontier being now efficiently guarded, the bands of insurgents have been easily dispersed.’

The state of things in Turkey when the insurrection commenced I take to be this—that the people, the Turks included, were, upon the whole, and considering all things, a good people; but the Government most intolerably bad. The Turks are, according to my view, in the main good, and the worst that can be said against them that they are Oriental, and have not come within the influence of modern civilisation and Christianity. The chief difficulty was that in Turkey two races and two religions were face to face—one race of one religion had all power in their hands; while

another race of another religion was altogether subject. But the people in whom the power was vested were at the same time poor, discontented, and down-going; while the subject-people were rising in their material position, and rapidly acquiring political aspirations inconsistent with their subject state—very much discontented on that ground. Add influences from outside unfavourable to the acceptance by the Christians of a contented inferiority, and internal influences of misgovernment, calculated to excite the Mahommedans, and to irritate the Christians; it is difficult to conceive a state of things more likely to bring about a collision attended with every circumstance of aggravation.

The special circumstances of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which led to the first outbreak there, are well explained in the famous Andrassy Note, from which I have already quoted. It is there shown that the difficulties were not only political and religious but mainly agrarian, that it was a question between exacting and tyrannical Mahommedan landlords and oppressed Christian tenants. Herzegovina being a poorer country, and more nearly allied to Montenegro, there were there greater facilities for rebellion than in Bosnia proper. The agrarian situation in these provinces was, and is, such that a settlement is much more difficult than in Bulgaria, where the difficulties are chiefly political, and not to a great extent agrarian. The Turkish Government having got into financial difficulties, and being pressed for

money, pressed the Bosnian landlords, the Bosnian landlords in turn pressed the tenants by greater exactions than was their wont, and the rebellion resulted. That rebellion simmered for a long time before it led to greater events. The Turkish Government, not having yet abandoned the pretext of solvency, were unwilling to undertake a large campaign, and showed that want of vigour which is so much condemned in the English despatches. They appealed to diplomatic aid rather than trusted to their own resources. The Russian Ambassador is said to have treacherously advised them not to push the rebels too hard. Perhaps from a Turkish point of view the advice was not good; but now we are convinced that a settlement of grievances rather than a severe repression was really required, and I cannot see that the Russian advice was so unjustifiable after all. The Bosnian rebellion had then lasted many months, when a rising took place in Bulgaria, small in itself, but which, no doubt, might have been very important, the times being critical, and the Bulgarian country being very large and very central. It undoubtedly created great alarm to the Turkish Government; they felt that, as they were situated, the spread of rebellion in Bulgaria might have led to the most serious if not fatal results to them.

Sir Henry Elliot seems to have been of that opinion, and he lost no time in urging upon them vigorous measures to suppress it. His despatch of May 7 abun-

dantly shows his feeling. 'I believe,' he says, 'that no exertion should be spared for assuring the immediate suppression of the movement, which, if allowed to extend, will become extremely serious.' In this instance the Turks undoubtedly did for once show vigour; they took measures energetic with a vengeance, and did certainly effectually stamp out the rebellion—a policy which, from their point of view, all considerations of humanity apart, was no doubt very successful.

While the Bulgarian rising was being thus vigorously suppressed, but while the details were not known, came the Berlin Memorandum. I need not go over what is so well known regarding the conduct of our Government on that occasion. Not only did the Government not accept the Note, but they acted directly contrary to that which the French and Italian Governments begged of them—namely, 'If you cannot accept the proposal, at least do not oppose it.' Practically they gave the proposal their active opposition. Lord Derby lost not a moment in informing the Turkish Ambassador that 'it was unlikely that Her Majesty's Government would join in pressing the adoption of the proposals on the Porte' (see despatch to Sir H. Elliot, 263, of May 16, 1876, only three days after these proposals were made at Berlin), a communication which to all intents and purposes amounted to advice to the Porte not to accept the proposals. No doubt, on that occasion, the Government had a great diplomatic

triumph, and they succeeded in wholly throwing out the Berlin proposals, and substituting their own policy, which was to make a ring, to protect the Porte against any interference by the Powers, to prevent any outside assistance reaching the Christians, and to let the Ottoman Government fight it out with their subjects, using for the purpose all the exceptional power which they then possessed in the great army and military material accumulated by means of the money borrowed from Europe.

It is true, as the Duke of Argyll has observed, that when the papers were submitted to Parliament at the fag end of the Session, and a very hurried discussion took place, no leader of any great party took upon himself openly and distinctly to oppose the policy of the Government in respect of the Berlin Memorandum. This is certainly so, but the facts were then very imperfectly known; and the truth of the Bulgarian massacres had not been ascertained. There was a feeling that perhaps the Government had great political reasons behind which could not be divulged; and there was a patriotic desire not to embarrass them by any division of our own ranks.

These circumstances sufficiently account for, and, I think, justify the conduct of the leaders of the Opposition. Three or four private Members did rush in where angels feared to tread; it may well be that they were of the character generally attributed to people who

so act, and that it is merely an accident that they turned out to be right in the end. I do not seek to claim credit for myself in that way, but I may say just so much, in order to show that I have throughout held the opinions I now hold, that I did place on the Paper of the House a motion aimed at the policy of the Government at this time.

At first I worded it so as to express regret that any action of our Government should lead to a continuance of the war of races. But I was advised to avoid the appearance of direct censure, and I toned it down to these words: ‘That this House, while appreciating the motives of Her Majesty’s Government in abstaining from active support of the Berlin Memorandum on the affairs of Turkey, hopes that no action of the British Government will hinder measures on which the principal Powers of Europe may agree, with the view to prevent an internecine war of races and creeds in that country.’

As is well known, the Government allowed only one evening for the discussion of this great question. I rose late in the evening to support my view, but did not find an opportunity of doing so. Probably I was little entitled to a confident view, but the suggestion I intended to make was this: ‘Granted that the Berlin Memorandum is not itself a satisfactory or sufficient solution of the subject, still the matter should be settled in some way; if we are not prepared to intervene, I do not see why we should prevent others from



intervening, and why we should not ourselves take occasion to join them if a fitting opportunity shall afterwards arise.'

I have always held, and still hold, the view, that our own immediate interests in Turkey are immensely exaggerated. I incline to believe that the German Powers, so much nearer to the Danube, have, in fact, a much more direct and pressing interest in the matter; and that it is the result of our officiousness and fussiness that we allow ourselves to be so much put forward to 'bell the cat,' so far as Russia is concerned. I thought that, the German Powers having volunteered to come forward in concert with Russia, we might trust to their interests to prevent Russia going too far; and that while, from the view of English interests only, our abstinence from active support of the Christians of Turkey might be well defended, we might in that case, with advantage, take a leaf out of the German book—act as the Prussians acted at the time of the Crimean War, and as Germany is now acting—that is, reserve ourselves, maintain a discreet neutrality, say, 'Gentlemen, settle it if you can; we hold ourselves ready to assist when we see the occasion opportune, and to guard our own interests when we find it expedient to do so.' However, the policy of the Government was otherwise—they intervened, but only to protect the Turks from interference; and, within the ring which they formed, the parties were left to fight it out.

Now let us go back to the Bulgarian Insurrection—if insurrection it can be called. It may be admitted that, beyond the chronic misgovernment, and a little extra turn of the financial screw, the Bulgarians had not very unusual and immediate grievances to complain of at the moment, and that any attempt that they made was a political movement. A few young men among them took advantage of the apparently favourable opportunity to make a small effort to obtain their freedom, in the hope that in the state of the political atmosphere the thing might spread, and good might come of it. It may have been imprudent, but, from a moral and political point of view, the insurrection of the Bulgarians was every way justifiable, as the Duke of Argyll has so forcibly shown.

Then, as to the facts of the rising, I have admitted that a rising on a small scale there really was. Mr. Baring somewhat unnecessarily puts into his report remarks which show that he is a violent political partizan in his views regarding the Russians; and, in respect of matters which were not the subject of his local and personal enquiry, his opinions, biassed as they are, are worth no more than those of a single subordinate of the British Embassy. But it is the more to his credit that the facts which he was sent to investigate upon the spot are stated by him with great impartiality.

Putting aside, then, the story of the political machi-

nations which preceded the actual rising, Mr. Baring's account of the rising itself seems to be a fair and good one. No doubt a few schoolmasters and others educated in Russia had something to do with it, and the young men who took part in it may have had high aspirations. The rising itself was very much the kind of thing which might have been expected under the circumstances. It commenced on May 1. A few policemen were killed and a small number of Mahomedan officials here and there. In one instance a considerable body of gipsies appear to have been killed under circumstances which have not been explained ; but it is perfectly clear that nothing like a general massacre of Mahomedans was in any case committed or attempted by the insurgents. There were but isolated cases such as I have mentioned in which a few Turks were killed in the disturbances attending the rising. Naturally people were unwilling to admit that they had seen anything of these transactions, and we have but little of the rebel account of the circumstances. But Mr. Baring's history of one case has struck me very much. A great deal has been made of the alleged atrocious murder by the Christians of six Turkish policemen, or Zaptiehs, at the railway-station at Bellova. Now this seems to be the only case in respect of which we have European testimony — railway officials being still about the place. It is perfectly clear from Mr. Baring's report

that the Zaptiehs were not in the ordinary sense murdered at all; they were killed in resisting an attempt to disarm them; and one of them who eventually surrendered was not only perfectly well treated, but was paid for his horse and arms—an extraordinary instance of rebel liberality. I believe, then, that very little atrocity, but for the most part only ordinary acts of rebellion, can be attributed to the Christians.

There is printed with Mr. Baring's report a paper supposed to contain the plans of the insurgents, which, says Sir Henry Elliot, 'the Turks affirm, and Mr. Baring believes to be genuine.' But of the genuineness of this document there is not a tittle of evidence; on the contrary, I take it upon myself to say, on the view of a man accustomed to deal with such things, that it bears the most palpable internal evidence of falsehood. Who ever heard of people bent on an enterprise of this kind putting upon paper all the crimes they propose to commit, in the worst possible light? It is an enemy and not a friend who has drawn that picture. More than that, the form in which the paper is drawn makes it very clear to my mind that it is the work of a Mahomedan lawyer, and not of a half-educated Christian insurgent. It is the Mahomedan fashion to put a case in such a way that the argument is included in the question, and the response is as brief as possible. A notable instance of the kind was the Futwa taken from the head of the Mahomedan law on the occasion of

the deposition of the Sultan, and which was published. The whole of the reasons for the deposition are set forth in the question, and the answer of the Sheik al Islam is confined to the single monosyllable 'Yes.' So it is in this pretended paper. 'Is it advisable to set fire to Philippopolis in forty and to Adrianople in sixty places?' Answer: 'Yes.' 'Is it desirable to do so-and-so?' 'Yes,' with a qualification. 'Is it desirable to avoid so-and-so?' 'No'—and so on. The only case in which mercy is to be shown to the vanquished is exactly that which the Mahommedan law prescribes.

The rising, such as it was, took place in Ortakeui, Avrat-Alan, and one or two other villages, or small towns; but in most of the places which were destroyed there was no rising at all. The very utmost that was even alleged against them is that they made some feeble preparations for self-defence when the disturbances broke out, as very well they might. What then took place? Mr. Baring supposes the Turkish Government to have been, for the time, wholly apathetic and almost ignorant of the rising, and blames them very much for failing to send regular troops. That was not a matter of local enquiry; and I must take leave to hold an opinion on this subject entirely different from that of Mr. Baring. It has been already pointed out by others that Sir Henry Elliot's despatches alone abundantly contradict this view of Mr. Baring. So far from troops

not being despatched, Sir Henry Elliot distinctly says, so early as May 7, and before the dreadful events which soon followed had taken place, that 5,000 troops had been despatched by rail; and, no doubt, the Turkish Government shared with him the great apprehension which he expressed in that same despatch and which I have already quoted. In fact the official record shows that the troops almost immediately appeared upon the scene. In the meantime, on May 8th or 9th, the first great atrocities were commenced by Militia Bashi-Bazouks, led by Turkish officials. Very much is now made of the fact that in the worst case of all, that of Batak, the massacre was committed neither by Turkish troops nor even by Turks, but by the Bulgarian Mahomedans, called Pomaks. The circumstances were these : Batak, situated in the Rhodope mountains, was very much isolated from the mass of Christian Bulgarians; it was in a country dominated by a group of Pomak villages. Bulgarians though they be, the Pomaks seem to be in many respects inferior to the Christian Bulgarians, and they are said to be more fanatic and bloodthirsty than the Turks. They were far less prosperous than their Christian brethren, and had had many local quarrels with the Batak people. They had just been worsted in a law-suit about some uncultivated land lying between Batak and the Pomak villages. They were indebted to creditors in Batak; and altogether their feeling towards that place was

not amiable. It was under these circumstances that, no serious provocation having been given by Batak, and the worst alleged against it being some precautionary arrangements in self-defence, the Turkish officials at Tatar-Bazardjik sent Achmed Agha—of infamous notoriety, himself a Pomak, and head of the local police—to make an example of the place, with the aid of the Pomak villagers. He did so in the terrible manner with which we are now familiar.

One or two other small towns were thus destroyed, and a large proportion of the inhabitants massacred, by Turkish police officers, making use of a Turkish posse comitatus, before the regular troops came into action; but a few days later some of the principal examples were made, at Perostitza, Ortakœi, and other places, by the regular troops, under officers of the regular Turkish army. I need not repeat the well-known facts, but will here insert a description of the sort of thing, which I wrote from Philippopolis to one of my constituents at Kirkcaldy, and which has been published :—

“There is no sort of doubt of the horror of the atrocities which have been committed. Of course, when there are such interests involved in keeping down the truth, I cannot, more than anyone else, pretend to get at it all in a few days. The exact truth never will be known for there is no one to be depended on who is in a position to make a real and sufficient enquiry. I can-

not at all answer for the details of the horrors which have been told—the many tortures, and worse things. Judging by my experience in other parts of the world, I think it likely that there is a good deal of exaggeration in the stories told by the Christians about these things; any way they are bad enough. But about the massacres, and destruction, burning, and plundering, there can, unfortunately, be no doubt whatever. These things are in no degree exaggerated; there is ocular proof of them. An attempt was lately made by the pro-Turkish party to make out that a large proportion of those supposed to have been killed have returned to their villages. I have ascertained that there is not the least ground for this assertion. At Batak there are not now nearly so many people as Mr. Baring reported to be left alive, and so in other places. I confess I did not expect the destruction to be so complete as I found it. Attempts have been made to compare these things with what has been done by ourselves in India, the French in Algeria, or the Russians in Central Asia. I have seen a good deal in my day, but never anything for one moment to compare with this, and I am satisfied that there has been nothing like it in modern days. It is not what we generally understand by burning villages. I don't think people who have not been here even yet realise what has really happened. What are called villages here are really considerable towns, not in any degree barbarous, uncivilised places, but good, substantial towns, with



houses as good as those in our towns. It was not only setting fire to them and letting them burn; the destruction was organised and systematic—it was all in the way of making examples and terrorising the others. There are considerable towns, which had a population of several thousands each, in which there is not a single house or part of a house left, not a corner spared by any accident—all utterly destroyed. We can't get the exact number killed; we never can; but rather expecting, as I did, to find some exaggerations, still after comparing the statements of all the most impartial people I could find, I am satisfied that Mr. Baring's statements on this subject are, on the whole, certainly not over, probably rather under, the truth. The French Consul, who is probably in the most impartial position, says that not less than 15,000, at the least, were killed in the districts around this. The Austrian Consul, whose political sympathies are in the direction opposed to exaggeration, estimates them from 12,000 to 15,000; and there are some massacres in other parts of the country not counted up. Then, in another way, I think we have hardly realised what it is that has happened. Somehow or other we accustom ourselves to hear of great numbers of Africans or Chinese, or other distant and heathen people, perishing in their bloody wars and revenges; but, till I saw it, I confess I did not realise how completely these Bulgarians are *European, fair-haired Christians like ourselves*. The men of the lower ranks are not

quite like our men, because they wear a peculiar dress, but the women and children, I declare, I could not distinguish from so many women and children of Kirkcaldy. It is these decent, civilised people who have been made so terrible an example of by their semi-civilised rulers, because some few of them were supposed to have made a feeble attempt at revolt against the treatment they received. As I said, for villages, in the accounts you must read moderate-sized towns. To understand what has taken place, imagine that in our own islands a strong and tyrannical Government had got very much the upper hand, was ruling the country in the most tyrannical fashion with mercenary agents, policemen, &c. Suppose that Lancashire had broken out into rebellion, and that the feeling in Scotland was much excited; suppose an *émeute* had taken place in Dundee, in which some of the foreign policemen were killed, and one or two small affairs of the kind had happened in Fife. Suppose that, by way of keeping the country quiet, an overwhelming force came to make an example of our Fife towns, and, taking the people quite unprepared, razed Kirkcaldy and St. Andrews to the ground, not leaving one house, and killing a couple of thousand men, women, and children in the one, a thousand in the other; suppose that Cupar was made a still more dreadful example of, the whole population, of both sexes and all ages, except a few who escaped in time, being slaughtered; you have then just about the sort of thing that occurred.

Batak was in fact a town considerably larger than Cupar.<sup>1</sup> There is only this difference, that if we Scotch were ripe for rebellion against tyranny it would need pretty strong measures to put us down, while in the case of these poor Bulgarians there was not this excuse, for they have been so long accustomed to political slavery that they had it not in them to make a serious rebellion; they occupied only open defenceless towns and villages, and very moderate measures in strong hands would have very easily suppressed any attempt at a rising on the part of a few young men among them."

The question is still pending, who is to blame for these things? My own view is very decided, that the main blame lies with the Turkish Government. I believe that they did exactly what the same Government has done on previous occasions—that they sought to stamp out the rebellion by extreme severity, and not only to stamp out the rebellion but to make an example, which should keep down the Bulgarians for a long time to come. That, no doubt, they have done very effectually. It will be a long time before the Bulgarians rebel again, unless they have better hopes of assistance from without. The policy of the Turkish Government has further, from the very beginning,

<sup>1</sup> Cupar is a town of a little over 6,000 inhabitants.

been to suppress the facts by every possible means. Communications were stopped, and energetic measures were taken to prevent the facts from coming to light. Particulars of such a case as Batak may not have been immediately known at Constantinople; but to say that the general character of what was done was entirely unknown to the Government there, when it happened in the best and most populous part of their dominions, under the eyes of the officials of every grade, in places directly connected with Constantinople by railway and telegraph, is, it seems to me, utterly absurd. It is as if we were to suppose that such things happened in Yorkshire and the English Government knew nothing at all about it. In a general way the Turkish Government were assuredly fully aware of the sort of things that were done, and having first taken, as I have said, active steps to conceal the facts as much as possible, they next proceeded to send Commissioners to make entirely false reports.

Now that the facts have nevertheless come out, in spite of them, the line which they take is this: first, to exaggerate the insurrection and the deeds done by the insurgents, and to palliate and modify the actions of their own people as much as may be possible. Secondly, for so much as cannot be got rid of, to throw the blame partly on the Pomaks, and partly on the late Grand Vizier and the ministry of Sultan ~~Aziz~~ <sup>Aziz</sup>. The last argument is now very largely used.

‘We have deposed and punished these wretches,’ they say; ‘surely you cannot blame us for what they did.’ The fact is that the change of ministry did take place while these things were going on, viz., on May 11; but however the old ministry and the new may have differed in other respects, they were quite at one on the subject of ‘stamping out’ with the utmost rigour the Bulgarian rising. The ministry of Mahmoud might have some pretext for saying that the matter was not fully within their control before they were deposed, but the new ministry have no such excuse to urge. While they were in office terrible deeds were done by the force under Chefkit Pasha, Hafiz Pasha, and the other officers of the regular army; they adopted and defended the deeds done. Whether or not we have legal evidence by which they could be found guilty of being accessories before the fact, no counsel in the world could attempt to defend them as accessories after the fact. They conspicuously rewarded the agents of the foul crimes, the fact being that their policy was much more highbanded than that of their predecessors. They it was who suppressed information on the subject, who sent their creatures to make false reports. They it is who to this day defend and support what was done. It may be that, if hard pressed, they may sacrifice Achmed Agha and the Pomaks, unless he is secured by the telegram from superior authority, which he is said to have in his pocket. Chefkit Pasha

and Hafiz Pasha have not been punished, and probably cannot be punished, because they acted under orders. Chefkit Pasha, so far from hiding himself, has been making himself conspicuous at Constantinople, writing letters to the papers to say that he has only done his duty, and heading deputations to thank the Hungarians for their sympathy; while Hafiz Pasha has been holding a high command in the army in the field, being, I believe, one of the few energetic officers there. No one has yet ventured to state what I was assured on the spot, viz., that in truth Abdul Kereem Pasha, formerly Minister of War, and lately generalissimo, was at Adrianople at the time, and himself directed what was done by the troops. I cannot say precisely how this was; but I understand it to be the fact that Abdul Kereem Pasha was there about the time that the atrocities were committed.

What seemed to me the worst of the whole matter is this, that, although I talked it over with several Turks in high office, and others at Constantinople, I did not there come across one man who expressed decent, and what I should call politic, regret in regard to these atrocities. The Turks see those miserable expressions of the opinion of some Englishmen, in which the most is made of the insurrection, and the least of the means by which it is suppressed, and that is the line which they themselves take. They say, following paragraphs from European papers, that they have not done a bit

worse than we have done in India, or the Russians in Turkistan.

Assuredly nothing that for one moment can compare to these things has been done in modern times either in India or in Turkistan. But this I believe to be the case, that when in the great Indian Mutiny we had received infinitely greater provocation on an immensely larger scale, we might have avenged ourselves, on the men at least, as the Turks have done, if our people had been prompted to vengeance by our high officials in India as the Mahommedans of Turkey were by the Turkish officials, and not restrained from such vengeance, as in fact our people were restrained by all high officials in India. It is in this view that I do not so much blame the common Turks. I do fear that it is human to kill when there is any encouragement to do so, and that even an Englishman, if you scratch him and expose him to scenes of blood, may turn out to be at bottom a northern barbarian after all.

The influences brought to bear at Constantinople in favour of the Turkish Government are enormous. Every visitor is subjected to immense pressure on every side to induce him to believe that the blame of the massacres must be thrown anywhere but on the Government itself. There is, no doubt, room for difference of opinion as to the degree to which the atrocities were ordered from head-quarters, or were the work of local authorities in excess of orders; but that the

deeds done were adopted, rewarded, and concealed by the Government, and that the fruits of those deeds in stamping out the rebellion, and establishing a reign of terror, were eagerly accepted by the Government, is quite patent.

Take a case in which a man's enemy is murdered, in which it is abundantly proved that it was done by his servants, that the property of the murdered man was appropriated by him, that the servants were very handsomely rewarded by him, that he made violent efforts to conceal their guilt, suborning false evidence in their favour to an unlimited extent—suppose all this, would you hold the man himself innocent? That is just about the case, other evidence apart.

Those who know the country best tell me that they found their confidence, that these terrible things were done in pursuance of a policy of stamping out the rebellion, by such examples as should effectually deter others, on the really tractable character of the ordinary Turks, and the belief that they would never have ventured on such things on such a scale without official instigation and direction. This view is, to my mind, entirely confirmed by my own observation. There was no indiscriminate slaughter, plunder, and destruction such as might be the work of an unregulated mob. Not a soul was touched except those whom the Government desired to make an example of. Not a single Bulgarian Catholic, not a Protestant, not a Greek, not a foreigner



was touched; only the Bulgarians of the Bulgarian Church—there was the most exact discrimination. Then, as I saw myself, the total destruction of the doomed places was not such destruction as a mob seeking plunder commits. I have seen many places which have been sacked and plundered, but never anything like one of these Bulgarian towns, in which the destruction is so complete and systematic that I cannot doubt that it was deliberately carried out as an example.

The fact is the Turkish Government is on the horns of a dilemma—either they were or were not ignorant of what was done—either, then, they promoted and concealed a stamping out of a slight rising on the part of a few Bulgarians by a terrible massacre of many; or they must be inefficient, ignorant of what goes on in their territory, and incapable of either restraining, discovering, or punishing, to a degree which must almost be called ludicrous. In either case, these events put them beyond the pale of civilisation and the operations of treaties.

As to the reports of Turkish Commissioners, it is out of the question to expect that we shall have anything of the least value. First Edib Effendi was sent; we have not seen his report, but Mr. Baring declares it an evident tissue of lies. Then we had another Commission, whose report is almost equally false, attributing every atrocity to the Christians and every virtue to the

Turks. Then we have Mr. Baring, honest in his facts, highly prejudiced in his political views ; and now we have another Turkish Commission sent, not to condemn, but to try to tone down Mr. Baring's facts as much as possible. The Commissioners, whom I saw at Philippopolis, seemed to be very gentlemanlike men, but they spoke as political partisans, and made no pretence of the judicial character. Some regrets they, on the spot, *did* express, but they will extenuate as far as is possible.

The terrible events in Bulgaria passed, and Bulgaria was reduced to peace after a fashion ; but the insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina went on, and at last the Servians and Montenegrins declared open war. No doubt they may have been actuated by some feelings of ambition as well as sympathy ; but, be that as it may, I cannot but think that they were entitled to sympathise with and assist their oppressed fellow-subjects. Nor do I see how we can so much blame the Russian volunteers. We have sent out volunteers to assist causes that we considered good ; and, although we have not often carried our enthusiasm and self-sacrifices to the point that the Russians did on this occasion, I have not heard that it has been made ground of complaint in this country that an Englishman has been willing to serve the Turks and assist them in suppressing Christian insurrections. Hobart Pasha has not been denounced for taking the service and the pay of

the Turks; and at this moment some English officers, or ex-officers, are eager to enter the Turkish service, without any outcry against them.

It was upon the occasion of the Servian declaration of war that a very strong feeling in favour of the Turks, and of indignation against the Servians, was manifested at Constantinople and in some quarters in England. I found at Constantinople a singular intensity of feeling, on behalf of the Turks, on the part of classes from whom one might not have expected it. It may be well, then, here to pause a little, to examine what are the causes of this strong pro-Turkish feeling. It may be remembered that Sir Henry Elliot made a great deal of the enthusiasm evinced by the Christians of Constantinople against the Servians. To some degree, I believe, this feeling was really genuine; it does, in fact, admit of a not difficult explanation. The Armenians of Constantinople are either the servants and allies of the Turks, or in a very humble position; and it was natural that their organs should be under the influence of the Government. But the most important Christian population of Constantinople are the Greeks. Now the position of the Greeks in this matter has been very peculiar. It need not be said that they are very ambitious of Greek aggrandisement. At the time of the Crimean War, the Greeks sought to obtain this in concert with Russia, and were disappointed. The Greeks of Greece now say that they were on the present

occasion restrained from taking part against the Turks by English advice. That advice, no doubt, they got, but they would not have cared one straw for it, if they had seen their way to better themselves without it. They were really influenced by other motives, in which their feelings were very strongly shared by the leading Greeks of Constantinople. Since the Crimean War great changes have taken place. That successful revolt of the Bulgarians from the social dominion of the Greeks has occurred, which I have already described. The Greeks believe that it was encouraged, if not got up, by the Russians and 'Panslavists, and their feeling towards the Slavs is now bitterly hostile. Still, if the Bulgarian insurrection had occurred, and the Bulgarian atrocities had been committed, in the country north of the Balkan, called 'Bulgaria' on the maps, and the sympathies of Europe had been directed to that quarter, the Greeks might have conceded so much, and might have made common cause; but, unfortunately from their point of view, those events took place in the Bulgarian country south of the Balkan—that is, the country which the Greeks especially covet. They think that whoever possesses this country south of the Balkan will eventually possess Constantinople; and they cannot bear that the Bulgarians should have taken so intolerable a course as to get themselves killed, and to attract the sympathies of all Europe in their favour, in that district. Hence they have looked upon the Bulgarian insurrec-

tion as most abominable and unjustifiable, and the Servian attempts to aid the Bulgarians as still worse. They came to the conclusion that, things having taken this unlucky turn, the chances were against their obtaining what they thought their fair share of the spoil, in any division which might now take place; and, that being so, they would very much prefer that the division should be postponed. Now, however, they see that events are so marching that the division may not improbably come sooner than they calculated upon; and they are in a terrible fright lest it should take place and they should be left out in the cold altogether.

That is the view of the independent Greeks, shared by a good many of those in Constantinople. But it is wonderful what an influence is exercised over the leading men of semi-Asiatic subjects of such a Government as that of the Porte, when they either look to its favour or fear its disfavour. A little time ago attention was drawn to the cringing servility of, I think, the Armenian Patriarch and his followers, in an address in which they extolled the cause of the Sultan. I confess I am surprised that, so late in the day, even some of the Greeks of Constantinople should have adopted a similar tone. In the *Times* of November 27 there is published an address professing to come from the Constantinople Greeks through the Œcumenical Patriarch, and which carries servility to the Sultan and his Government to an excess, only

equalled by the dislike of the Slavs which is manifested in this precious production. Thus it is that some of the organs of the Christians of Constantinople can be paraded as wholly in favour of the Government.

Then there is the local European feeling, of which a very large portion, it must be admitted, runs in the same groove.

To account for this feeling we must first look to the British Embassy. There is no mincing the matter; the British Embassy and its surroundings have throughout been the very focus of Philo-Turk and anti-Russian feeling. There has been, I believe, an openness in regard to this feeling which is, I think, surprising; and it has its influence, no doubt, upon many who serve the British Government, or take their cue from official sources.

Then the local papers are all under Government control. The *Levant Herald* follows in the same track. It is very cleverly written, and, I dare say, would correct abuses so far as they can be corrected, without touching the Government of the Porte; but of that Government it is the undisguised and unflinching advocate. What between the Embassy and the local press and the antagonism to the Russians, which seems to come natural to our soldiers and sailors, the anti-Russian feeling is, I understand, pretty strong among many of the officers of the fleet

at Besika Bay and the military men who are found about Constantinople. Again, the moneyed interests connected with the Porte are very large and very influential. The holders of Turkish bonds and many important men whose words go far in Levantine society must be influenced by their position. A good many Englishmen and other foreigners are, one way and another, in the service of the Porte, and a number of others hope to be, especially the military men who are hanging about in search of employment. So altogether it happens that, a few of the independent merchants apart, the current of the English-speaking feeling in Constantinople runs with great strength in favour of the Porte, and the views of the English party which takes the same view are there exaggerated and intensified.

It is almost impossible for a man who does not understand the subject very thoroughly to pass through Constantinople unscathed; there is no place in the world so unfavourable to getting at the truth as this capital, where such strong influences are brought to bear to pervert it. The truth, indeed, might by these influences have been wholly suppressed. The word of the Turkish Government and their supporters might have been taken in denial of the atrocities and of everything that was inconvenient, if there had not been, fortunately, the independent correspondents of the English newspapers. By them, as we know, the

terrible things which have occurred in the interior have been brought to light, and by them English feeling was aroused.

That powerful feeling in England led to Lord Derby's proposals for the settlement of the Turkish Question; and I am free to admit that in my view those proposals, even in their first somewhat vague shape, contain the true principle on which the question must be settled. Absolute autonomy may be at present impossible, but the proposal that a large measure of local self-government should be introduced into the Provinces whose grievances have been before the world, is that upon which a settlement, if settlement there be, must be based. I am sure the country would have very readily condoned the conduct of the Government in sticking for a while to the old pro-Turkish policy, if, after Lord Derby had acted upon his professed willingness to be guided by any decided expression of public opinion, he had only kept to the proposals which he himself made following that opinion.

Those proposals made, Lord Derby and the Government were committed to them; Russia at once accepted them, all the other Powers accepted them, and they were formally pressed upon the Porte. I do not find that the Turkish Government in so many words absolutely rejected the proposals in writing, but in effect they most certainly did so. There can be no doubt whatever about that. As Lord Derby euphoniously



puts it: 'It had in the meantime become evident that the Turkish Government entertained strong objections both to the signature of the Protocol promising reforms in the insurgent Provinces and to the expression of Local Autonomy as applied to such reforms.' In fact, the Turks made no secret whatever that they wholly rejected Lord Derby's proposals, and were determined not to submit to them. In conversation with leading Turks I found that they avowed this deliberately and openly. They were ready to admit that Lord Derby's proposals were, in one sense, moderate, but they said they are '*impossible*.' Such was very decidedly the view of the reforming Young Turkish party.

That, in reference to this crisis of the negotiations, Lord Beaconsfield should assert that the conclusion of peace was prevented by the Servians and the Servians only, does seem very astonishing. It is notorious that the Servians could have been brought under control at any moment. It was simply the rejection by the Turks of Lord Derby's proposals that rendered the conclusion of peace impossible.

The Turks having taken this decided attitude, and it being perfectly clear that they would yield to nothing but force (perhaps it was hardly to be expected that they should yield except to force that which no doubt amounted to some surrender of their independence), the Emperor of Russia took another step, for which I confess I think he had a great deal of ground. He communicated

to the Powers and to Lord Derby the proposal that, in the event of the terms of peace being refused by the Porte, in order to enforce those terms Bosnia should be occupied by an Austrian, and Bulgaria by a Russian force, while the fleets of the Powers should enter the Bosphorus.

This proposal became public at the time, and caused a considerable change in the feeling of a large section of the English public. In fact, it a good deal diverted the feeling against Turkey into another channel, viz., a strong jealousy of and feeling against Russia, both in England and elsewhere. It was argued that the Emperor had at last shown the cloven foot; that the proposal to occupy Bulgaria meant an attempt to annex that part of Turkey at least, and that the Russian designs were such that we must return to our old policy of antagonism and resistance. Yet it is now disclosed, in Lord Derby's recently published despatch, that the conduct of the Emperor of Russia was, in fact, at that time surprisingly moderate. It seems exceedingly strange that when the proposal to occupy Bulgaria was made known the rider to that proposal was not made known.

Here it is as set forth in Lord Derby's despatch: '*The Russian Government stated themselves, however, willing to abandon the proposal of occupation if the naval demonstration was considered sufficient by Her Majesty's Government.*' Surely nothing could be more

moderate, nothing more calculated to conciliate us, than that. If the English proposals were to be enforced upon the Turks, the Russians could have made no suggestion more fitted to disarm our jealousy than this. 'If you don't like that we should coerce them,' in effect they said, 'do it yourselves.'

I think it most unfortunate that this suggestion was not then accepted. The Dardanelles were then almost unarmed, our fleet was in great strength in Besika Bay—the proposals which it was sought to impose upon the Turks were only those which must in the end be imposed, if the matter is to be settled without a European war. If our Government had only said to the Turks: 'We are in earnest: the thing must and shall be done; the Great Powers have agreed on it; we mean to enforce it; and if you don't agree the fleet shall be at Constantinople within forty-eight hours,' I feel very confident that the Turks would have yielded, and the question would so far have been settled at that time, before all this irritation in Russia reached anything like its present point, and before all this useless blood had been spilt on the Servian frontiers.

But here comes the turning-point of the negotiations—the part of these transactions in respect of which I must say that the conduct of Her Majesty's Government seems to me utterly unjustifiable and inexplicable. I cannot but think that, the Turks resisting the English proposals (as resist they must,

if they think they can do so with success), and the feeling caused by the Russian proposal for the occupation of Bulgaria having given courage to the Ministerial party, the Government did recede from their own proposals in a way which looks very much like bad faith towards Russia and the other Powers which had accepted and adopted those proposals.

Of this part of the negotiations I was, if I may so express it, an eyewitness—not because I was behind the scenes, but because the thing was done in public. The English Government had proposed that a measure of local self-government should be granted to the three Provinces under a European guarantee, and that in order to settle the matter in this form an armistice of not less than one month should be agreed on. The Turks openly set aside the English proposals for the three Provinces; they evaded that part of the question altogether, proposing to substitute reforms of their own for the whole Empire; and then they made that counter-proposal for a six months' armistice which was the turning-point in the negotiations. If cleverness is to be tested by success, certainly this proposal was a remarkably clever one. I confess the rottenness of the proposal seems to me so palpable that its success I should deem to be due rather to the avidity of the English Government to accept anything which would relieve it of its own inconvenient propositions, than to the skill in diplomacy of the Turks.

What did this proposal for a six months' armistice mean? Simply this: that by an arrangement of that kind, in which the Great Powers were to take part, their hands should be absolutely tied for six months, without any concession having been made by the Turks. If that plan had been accepted, the Turks would have been absolutely secure for the full term of the armistice; no one could have touched them; and being so secure, we may be perfectly certain that they would have conceded nothing—they would have negotiated to the last minute. They made no secret that their plan was to introduce during this time their own reforms; and then they would have said: 'Oh, dear! the Bulgarian Massacres are an old story. We have made our reforms, as we said we would, and you cannot think of interfering with us now. Let our plan have a fair trial.' Thus, as they thought, the matter might have been staved off by another paper concession, without reality, and without guarantee.

The argument used by the Turks was this: 'We won't make any concessions to the insurgent Provinces under the coercion of the Powers, or such as to give them right of interference, but we will of our own motion make greater concessions to the whole Empire.' Now, not only was the absence of a European guarantee a fatal defect in any proposals of this kind, but the intended concessions themselves are, for the purposes that we desire, quite a sham.

There is a radical difference between the English proposals and the Turkish proposals. Lord Derby proposed to decentralise—to localise—to give a large measure of local self-government to the three Provinces. ‘Oh, no!’ the Turks said, ‘we won’t do that at present; we will think about that afterwards; but in the meantime we will give a Senate and a House of Assembly, and liberties on a most centralised European model.’ They want to begin from above—they want to centralise more than ever. They want—or at least Midhat Pasha and the men of the Reforming Party want—to play at Parliaments, and to put Europe off with that panacea for all evils. In my judgment such a remedy for the ills of Turkey is ridiculously inappropriate. You could have but a sham Assembly, to be managed by the Bureaucracy at Constantinople, and in which very good care would have been taken that the Mahommedan element, aided by the Christian creatures of the Government, should wholly prevail. There was also, I believe, an intention that the Provincial Assemblies should in some way be reformed and liberalised, but it was not proposed to go beyond that.

Such, then, was the farce which the Turks proposed to substitute for the English proposals. What happened then? Why, that the English Ambassador—with the sanction, I presume, of his Government—at once went over to the Turks, supported them in their six

months' armistice without concessions, and in effect postponed and overthrew the proposals that had been agreed on. I believe Sir H. Elliot considered that the Turkish plan of reform would or might answer the purpose required. I see now, in the *Times* of November 28, that he in some sort explains this; but see how he puts it. He says that we have not even yet been made acquainted with the new measures proposed by the Porte; 'but I have said that when the new measures are published it will be necessary to see whether they confer upon the Provinces in question that which was demanded of them.' Now, Sir Henry knew very well the general character of the reforms which the Turks were devising, and this he certainly knew—that they proposed to make these reforms themselves, and not under an agreement with the Powers, as Lord Derby proposed. So that, on his own showing, instead of pressing the English proposals, which had become the proposals of the six Powers, he intimated his willingness to consider the Turkish plan, when, after all dilatory pleas being exhausted, it should at some later time be published.

At any rate at this time there happened that of which the Emperor of Russia, with, I think, undeniable justice, complains—we actually accepted the Turkish six months' armistice without communicating with Russia and the other Powers who had joined with us in the English proposals. The English Ambassador gave his consent, before there had been any opportunity of com-

municating with the Government of Russia ; but, more (and this is the point on which I think explanation is most especially required), not only he gave his consent, but it was publicly known that he had consented. There was at this time the most extraordinary absence of diplomatic reticence ; that is what I mean when I say that, in common with everyone else at Constantinople, I was a witness of what was going on. Every man, woman, and child at Constantinople knew it. Every Turk, every person one met in the street, told one—first, that the English had accepted the Turkish proposal ; then that the English had obtained the consent of the French and Austrian Governments, and that it only remained to see whether Russia would accept ; then that Russia was the only obstacle.

I refused to believe all this    I said : ‘ It cannot be true ; I cannot believe that the English Government, having committed themselves to Lord Derby’s proposals, can thus have gone back and gone over to the Turks ; and, if it were true, I am quite sure that it could not thus be made public at Constantinople without concert with the other Powers.’ Yet true it was, and it was from day to day allowed to become public as I have described. That conduct does seem to me to have been intolerably unfair towards the Russians, and it is very creditable to them that they did not resent it more than they did. At least they might have expected that, after there had been a con-



currence in the English proposals, they should have been consulted before the English accepted the Turkish put-off. As it was, the result, for the time, was another English diplomatic triumph in a small way. The short armistice was refused, the war went on, a very large quantity of blood was most uselessly spilt in those Servian battles, which could have no possible result one way or the other, and eventually the Turks, pushing forward their forces while the negotiations were going on, obtained a sort of military triumph before Alexinatz. That was, I believe, a very dear victory to them. One cannot imagine anything more irritating to the Russians than these events, which happened while they were still pressing the short armistice, and the Turks, with the countenance of the English Government, were staving it off. Then, more than at any other time, were the feelings which prevailed at Therapia and Pera evident. Everyone that one met exclaimed: 'Have you heard the news? Grand news—great victory! The Servians have been thoroughly well beaten; the Russians have been checkmated. It is all right now.' One would have thought that a great victory had been gained by English troops. I could not understand how such feelings could be excited by a Turkish victory,

It was when the fall of Alexinatz was imminent that the patience of the Russian Emperor came to an end, and the famous ultimatum was presented. In my opinion that course of the Emperor is quite

justifiable. I think that the Russians had a right to say: 'We have accepted the English proposals—moderate they must be, for you made them yourselves—from that position we will not recede. If you won't force the Turks to accept your proposals, we will. They have put us off for all these months; the spirit of our people is rising; the Servians, who ventured everything in the cause, and with whom our volunteers are fighting, are in imminent danger of being completely crushed; we can and will wait no longer; we must have a short armistice and a Conference, and an immediate settlement of the question, whether the English proposals are to be accepted by the Turks or not.' That those proposals had been in the mean time dropped by the English Government is, in fact, officially admitted; it was only on November 4, after the Russians had, by their ultimatum, pushed the matter home, that Lord Derby, in his despatch of that date to Sir Henry Elliot, intimates that the Government have 'determined to renew' the suggestion made by them, and to take the initiative in proposing a Conference at Constantinople on the basis of the proposals which they had previously made in September. I find it hard to understand why those proposals should ever have been dropped, and why it should have been necessary to renew them.

Here, too, come the incidents of the Emperor of Russia's peaceful declaration to our Ambassador, and of Lord Beaconsfield's extraordinary speech of defiance,

uttered a week after those peaceful professions. All England feels that Lord Beaconsfield's conduct on that occasion is utterly unintelligible; certainly nothing could be more calculated to defeat the object which the Government professed to have in view.

Lord Beaconsfield's rash speech apart, one cannot doubt that Lord Derby, representing the more sober feelings and policy of the Government, is now again anxious to carry out his twice-proposed plan; and all admit that, in the selection of Lord Salisbury as the agent of the British Government in the matter, a choice has been made which goes as far as may be to render success possible under extremely difficult circumstances—for extremely difficult the circumstances have now become; infinitely more so than they were in September. One can hardly wonder that the popular feeling in Russia has grown to such a point that it may be doubtful whether the Czar himself can restrain it.

It remains to be seen whether Lord Salisbury will succeed in filling up the skeleton plan of Lord Derby, in such a way that both England and Russia may accept it. And it also remains to be seen whether he can convince the Turks that England is this time really in earnest; and that no jealousy of Russia will prevent her from enforcing, by any means that may be necessary, the plan on which the two Powers may agree. The circumstances of the Conference are anything but

favourable to a peaceful settlement, and our only hope must be in the strong character of Lord Salisbury which may succeed in overcoming the trust of the Turks in their own diplomacy, and in English complacency or jealousy of Russia.

That a Conference in which Sir Henry Elliot takes part on the one side, and General Ignatieff on the other, and the Turks bear a part, should come to any amicable agreement is not to be expected. All that remains is for Lord Salisbury to come to terms with Russia, and enforce those terms on the Turks. I believe he might have settled the terms better anywhere than at Constantinople. While I think that, whether the Russian Government act in good faith or not, so far they are entirely justified in what they have done, I also believe it to be the case that General Ignatieff individually is an extreme man, very much an Oriental in character, and by no means the best man to settle the question. Probably no two men ever were posed together in a situation which ought to have required friendliness, who are more opposite in character, and antagonistic in purpose, than Sir Henry Elliot and General Ignatieff.

One hears a great deal about General Ignatieff at Constantinople; and he himself is very accessible to be interviewed, and has not concealed his views from those who approach him. One hears him described by many of the English as a Jesuit of the worst class, who has brought everything about for his own

designs; who, in fact, got up the massacres and prevented their being stopped, in order that he might have a sufficient case for the interference of Russia. He, on the other hand, would make out that there never was any rising in Bulgaria at all, that the Turks causelessly, and from a mere design to keep down the rising numbers of the Bulgarians, killed as many of them as possible, and so on.

After all that has passed I find it difficult to believe that the Russian Government are acting in bad faith, and, if it were only a question between English and Russians I should much hope for a settlement. The principal fear I think is, that the Young Turkey party may have become intoxicated with their military and diplomatic successes, and remain confident that an English Government which has so much wavered, and so repeatedly gone round in this matter, will not in the end allow Russia to invade Turkey without coming to their aid; that, disliking bitterly as they do the partial surrender of their independence which the English proposals involve, they may determine to chance it, may refuse the terms of the Powers, and trust to the belief that, when it comes to enforcing them, England and Russia will infallibly fall out sooner or later.

We must hope for the best. Again I say that if Lord Salisbury's force of character sufficiently impresses the Turks, the thing may be done. At

the same time I believe that, if we wish to preserve the peace of Europe, the first step to that end should be to recall Sir Henry Elliot. It is not that I fear Sir Henry's doing anything disloyal,—far from it,—but only to show the Turks that we are in earnest, and have really abandoned the pro-Turkish policy. As long as he remains, even nominally, one of the representatives of England, the Turks will be very hard to convince of the change in that policy; he is so identified both officially and personally with it, he so much took the part of the Turks when they tried to throw out the English proposals by what I must call the six months' dodge, that so long as he remains there is great danger that they may think the old policy has not been altogether abandoned. I think that Sir Henry is in some respects personally to blame; but, if he is not, having only acted as directed by his Government, make him a peer, or if need be a duke; give him a pension of five, ten, or twenty thousand a year; it will be the best economy in the long run.

One word more on Sir Henry Elliot's character and conduct before I conclude this chapter. I do not doubt that he is an honest and honourable man, and I am sure that an Elliot will always have the courage of his race; but all are agreed that he is not a brilliant man; he has not risen in the diplomatic service by genius. If he had not been an Elliot, he never would have risen beyond the point where the members of our diplomatic

service, favoured neither by special talents nor special family connections, usually stop. He is an old diplomatist of the old school, bred in that policy of supporting the Turk which has hitherto been followed by Whig and Tory alike. Not only do his official education and old prejudices make him philo-Turk, but during these negotiations and discussions he thinks that his honour has been impugned, and his conduct unjustly attacked. The effect on him has been, as it often is in such a man, to make him more dogged and obstinate in his views than ever. He has carried his antagonism to General Ignatieff and the Russians, and his support of the Turks, to that point, that I think he must be accused of a want of discretion and prudence. For the rest I believe that, while in this he has allowed himself to be carried away by his feelings, it has been so, as it were, unconsciously. He has certainly acted the part of an open and straightforward man, and I am sure that he has throughout intended to act fairly and honourably. All the same I think that he has done injustice to the Russians and unduly encouraged the Turks, and that if he can complain of General Ignatieff, Ignatieff may also fairly complain of him.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ENGLAND AND RUSSIA IN THE EAST.

I ENTIRELY believe that, in common with the other civilised peoples of Europe, we are greatly interested in taking care that events should not tend in such a direction, that some day or other Russia might become so powerful as to threaten the liberties of the Old World. I am well convinced that if that great Power should settle and consolidate her affairs at home, retaining a despotic and military character, while she should largely develop her wealth and resources; and should, at the same time, acquire a great and well-regulated dominion in Western Asia, and succeed in conciliating and commanding the hardy and soldier-like races professing the Mahommedan faith there and enrolling them in her armies, while the States of Europe remain divided by mutual jealousies and hatreds; then the liberties of Europe might be very seriously threatened indeed. At the same time, I incline to think that our own *relative* interest in this possible danger of the



future is apt to be very much exaggerated. Both in England and India we are more distant from Russia than the other Powers. I think we too much put ourselves forward to fight battles in which others, who lie by, have a greater stake.

Now as to our own particular interests, the maintenance of our empire in India is that which we have deemed to be most affected, and regarding which we are most sensitive. I have, in my place in Parliament, more than once expressed my view on that subject. It is briefly this. I do not doubt that if Russia were as firmly and well-established in all Turkistan as we are in all India, and if her means of communication in that province were complete, if she had a system of railways, connecting Russia with the northern slopes of the Indian Caucasus, and other such facilities, she would be a very inconvenient, if not dangerous, neighbour to us in India—supposing, of course, feelings of mutual jealousy and political antagonism to continue. No doubt in that case the Affghans would persistently intrigue to obtain money and advantages from either party; no doubt they would try systematically to put themselves up to the highest bidder. Probably we should be forced to increase our army, at present very small compared to the greatness of our Indian possessions, and the financial effect on our Indian exchequer would be very injurious, if not disastrous.

But, on the other hand, I say that Russia is yet far

from the position which I have indicated; that she has no tolerable means of communication in Turkistan, and that her military position is really yet very weak there; while so far from paying, as India does, Turkistan is, and must continue to be, a very heavy drain on the resources which she urgently requires for European purposes. I think it very doubtful if she will care to or can spend the money necessary to enable her to establish herself in Turkistan, in the way that I have supposed, for generations to come; I am sure she cannot do so for many years. Meantime, she has troubles, and difficulties, and political seethings in Europe; heaven only knows what may happen in Russia in the next twenty or thirty years. I hold, then, that as real danger from Russia is remote and uncertain, to magnify that danger is only to expose a raw of which Russia might take advantage; and as there is nothing to be done that would much improve our position, and if there were, we should, by ruining our not prosperous Indian finances, anticipate the very evil which we fear, it is very much better for us to lie by, to trust to the chapter of accidents, to husband our resources, and postpone measures to meet a danger of the future till that danger is real, in the confidence that, if it ever comes, we shall be better able to meet it with a calm front and full exchequer than if we fuss and spend our money before the time comes.

But suppose the worst—suppose that by some turn of

events the Russians reach Constantinople. Constantinople is not one step nearer to India than they already are ; their route evidently is by Turkistan and the Caspian, not through Asia Minor. No doubt, if Russia had completely absorbed Turkey, she might be a greater Power, and in one sense more dangerous. But, meantime, the very task of acquiring and administering that rich and great country would divert her energies from the profitless Turkistan, and would probably tend greatly to delay an approach to India.

‘ Well,’ but people say, ‘ there is the road to India ; if you had a Russian fleet in possession of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, your route by the Suez Canal would be threatened.’ Now, on that subject, I hold views which I am afraid few at present share with me ; it might be more prudent to keep them back, but I am accustomed to make a clean breast of it, and I will do so. I do so with diffidence, for I know there are very reliable and considerable men who in this go with the rest of the world and say : ‘ Ah ! but we must submit to any sacrifice rather than in any way risk the road to India.’

I am inclined to think that just as we formerly went to one extreme, and thought that the Suez Canal must be opposed as likely to lead to the ruin of English interests, so now we are inclined to go to the other extreme, and to attribute to the uninterrupted maintenance of the route too great importance, both

Commercially, no doubt it has turned out that we make much more use of the Canal than anyone else, and that we have, up to the present time, very greatly benefited by it. Yet I am not sure, speaking relatively, that we shall benefit in the end. Already, the silk trade, and some other trades, have shown a tendency to go direct to Mediterranean ports; and, to some extent, I believe that this must be more and more the case, and that in some branches of trade London will be at a disadvantage, compared to its position when everything came round the Cape. For naval and military purposes, again, I am inclined to think that it would probably best serve our purposes that the Canal should be a closed strait, as the Bosphorus now is. I believe its footing in that respect has not yet been settled. In the first instance, in the exigency of the Indian Mutiny, our troops were sent through Egypt as a favour, and now our troops and ships have established the practice of going through the Canal. A good deal is saved in the voyage. Yet, after all, we held India before we had the Canal route, and I believe we could hold it still if that route was stopped to our troops for a time.

I go so far as to doubt altogether whether it is really possible, in case of war with any considerable naval Power, to maintain the Mediterranean and Red Sea route to India for ordinary purposes, without an expenditure of men and money disproportionate to the object. The Prime Minister, last session, spoke of a chain of

forts extending from England to India. I ventured to point out that, though this is all very well as a figure of speech, the forts are, really, thousands of miles apart, there being but three in 7,000 miles; and that such a chain would be difficult to maintain. We are at this moment, from a naval point of view, so predominant in the Mediterranean, that perhaps we hardly recollect that it has not been so very long—it is only since the misfortunes of France—that we have held that position so completely. When the French were ambitious of naval power, having a large fleet, with great dockyards, and harbours, and coasts, on the Mediterranean, they undoubtedly rivalled us there. In such circumstances it would not have been possible that our merchantmen and our transports could follow a route which any considerable naval Power in the Mediterranean wished to intercept, unless we had first completely crushed that Power after a naval war, and altogether swept their fleets from the ocean.

Well, no doubt, if the Russian fleet had free access to the Mediterranean, although probably the Russians could not appear as a first-rate naval Power there, they might be there as a good second-rate Power; and in a war with Russia our communications by the Canal might be embarrassed, if not interrupted. Still, the interruption to our communications which such a Power might possibly effect is a very different thing from the free use of the route by that Power itself. Not unless we were

altogether defeated on the seas could the Russians, or any similar Power, attempt to use the Canal themselves while they shut us out of it. To do that they must command the seas on both sides—a circumstance which is not very likely to happen till the navy of England has fallen into decadence. In the event of a naval war in the Mediterranean it would come, I think, to this: that neither of the belligerent Powers could use the Canal freely for its own ordinary purposes.

The main gist of my argument on this subject is this. Granted that it may be possible that any one of several Powers, or two or three Powers combined, might, in the case of war, interrupt the traffic by the Suez Canal; we should not be ruined by that after all, nor would our hold of India be very seriously endangered. The Suez Canal is not the only route to India. There is the Cape route, which we have used, and which we may well use again. I don't think it is quite understood what the difference between the two routes really is. I believe that, taking Bombay as the nearest point, it is a question between a distance of 7,000 and 11,000 miles—a difference of say 4,000 miles. Certainly not by any calculation can the difference be made more than 5,000 miles, or twenty days' run by a good steamer. Three weeks' steaming then may be set down as the extreme difference between the route by the Cape and the route by Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. I put it so, but really the difference is not quite so much. No doubt it might

cost something more to send our troops by the Cape route ; but we have a very great abundance of fine ocean steamers, quite enough to carry all the troops that we should ever have available to send to India, if on occasion there should be a necessity to send them. And if now and again in extreme necessity we have to pay a little more for transport, and to use a route three weeks longer, what then ? India is not a petty colony to be taken by a *coup-de-main* ; it is a great military empire, with large resources in itself, and with the means of providing almost all military material in itself. If we cannot hold out for an additional three weeks while troops are coming round the Cape, our hold of the empire must be so weak that we had better give it up. How long does it take Russia to send troops into the heart of Turkistan ? I take it, a period compared to which the voyage of our troops round the Cape would be a trifle.

On the whole, then, while I do not deny that it is very desirable to maintain the Suez Canal route at all times if we can, and that it would be a disadvantage to us that a Russian fleet entering the Mediterranean should add another to the Powers which might possibly interfere with that route, I don't deem the possibility of such a contingency in the future to be such a very terrible one that it need exercise an overwhelming influence over our whole policy, and lead to a vast expenditure of men and money in order to prevent

the remote possibility of such a risk. At any rate, of this I feel pretty sure, that the route by the Suez Canal is not so near to us as, and not dearer to us than, the Danube route to the Germans; and, after all, the Russians must cross the Danube and appropriate the German river long before they can come to Constantinople, and establish themselves in a position to threaten our Canal communications. I think, then, we might let the Germans settle the Danube question before we trouble ourselves very seriously about the Canal.

Then there is yet another view of our case. It is said the Russians are terrible protectionists—the Turks are comparatively free traders; if once the Russians get possession of Turkey they will put on their protectionist duties, and Manchester goods will be shut out. It is very likely this might to some degree be so; but, after all, the world is a large world; our commerce is wide; and I almost doubt whether it would be worth our while to undertake single-handed a great war in order to preserve Turkey as a field for Manchester goods. Perhaps if Turkey became wealthy and prosperous, even under a protectionist system she might take as many goods as she does now.

Thus, then, the conclusion to which I come is that our more special and particular interests in Turkey are not really so great as to render it necessary that we should be more prominent than other Powers, and make greater sacrifices than other Powers, in order to prevent the possible advance of Russians into Turkey. But I have



admitted that in common with other Powers we have a distinct interest in preventing the too great aggrandisement of Russia. I am not one of those who would follow a policy of isolation; I would rather see the closer federation of European States for mutual arbitration and settlement of difficulties. I would quite concur in the view that, acting with other Powers, and not alone, we should take measures to secure the present Turkish territory against ambitions on the part of Russia, which, though we may believe in the sincerity of the negations of the present Czar, may under certain circumstances spring up any day. I do not place too much faith in the Russians; on the contrary, I am inclined to be distrustful of them—to think them Oriental in their diplomacy and their ways. That is perhaps all the more reason why we should not put them in the right, and give them any just cause of complaint.

I have expressed the belief that in the late negotiations, so far as has yet become apparent, Russia has done nothing for which we can fairly blame her, and, on the contrary, she has had on one or two occasions very good ground for complaining of our conduct towards her. I think it, then, of the utmost importance that we should deal fairly and liberally by Russia and the Russians; that we should put ourselves as far as we can in their place, consider the feelings which we should have if our position was what theirs is, and make some allowance for their reasonable and natural sympathy for

the Slav cause, and for the excitement which the massacre of those whom they consider their brethren has caused among them. See what an excitement and feeling has been caused among us by the Bulgarian massacres; how much greater would it be if the Bulgarians were a people very much nearer to us, allied to us by blood and religion, whose protection had always been a cardinal point of our policy—who had come to us for education and assistance—whose cause had become almost sacred in our eyes! Can we be surprised that Russian sympathy for the oppressed Christians of Turkey has run very high indeed? Can we blame the volunteers who have gone to aid their cause? If the Russian Government has not checked those volunteers, is it not much better that some volunteer aid should be given to the Christians than that the Russian Government itself should have intervened without the concurrence of the other Powers? I believe there is no doubt whatever of this, that the volunteers are genuine volunteers; that the money to send them, and the means by which they were supported, were found by private subscription in Russia, and not by the Government. In some sense the Russian Emperor has now acknowledged the volunteers; and, after all, Russian as he is, he could hardly have disowned them, but he only owns them as volunteers.

There is another important view of this part of the case. It has been pointed out that there are two

Russias—there is the despotic Russia of the despotic Government; and there is the new Russia of recent popular movements for social and political freedom. It seems very clear that this latter power in Russia has of late acquired a development which we have hardly realised. Coming home from Paris the other day, I read a striking article in one of the French papers, which very vividly described the ideas now prevailing in Russia as curiously similar to those which preceded the French Revolution. For my part, my confidence in the chapter of accidents, which may intervene before Russia is very dangerous to India, is very much founded on the belief that these popular elements will further develop into great social revolutions, and that it is impossible to say whether a generation hence Russia may be still an empire, or a federated republic, or a dozen separate republics. Be this as it may, it is certain that the main element in Russia which sends out volunteers to fight in Turkey is the popular and democratic element—that the Russian volunteers are deeply imbued with these popular ideas.

Now it so happens that popular and democratic ideas and forms of government are also prevalent among the south Slavs, as well as among some other States of south-eastern Europe. The Servian constitution is, I am told, extremely democratic; the people are peasant proprietors, who brook no aristocracy and little kingly power. The Bosnian movement is a demo-

cratic one, on the part of the peasants against the landlords. The Slav feeling in the Austrian territories is, I take it, a popular feeling against the Hungarian aristocracy or squirearchy. Going beyond the Slavs, the Roumanians also have a very popular form of government. I think I have already pointed out that the south Slavs are entirely separated from the Russians by the Hungarians and Roumanians. May it not then be that the best security against the predominance of a despotic Russia, south of the Danube, would be the establishment of popular and free south-Slav States in that country? My own belief is that we should do well to encourage these Slav peoples. The Bulgarians would come in as a very steadying element. Not being thorough Slavs, and having a nationality and character of their own, they would not be likely to amalgamate with the northern Slavs in an inconvenient way, though they might well federate with the south Slavs.

When I said that I hoped that our Plenipotentiary would be able to come to terms with Russia, it must be understood that we can only do so by yielding to the fair demands of Russia in this matter; the thing has now gone too far for us to expect that the Russians would be satisfied with any half concessions. They will certainly not recede from Lord Derby's plan fairly interpreted. It will not do that we should now attempt to whittle that away, far less that we should

accept the counter-plan of the Turks, as in itself sufficient.

If we have reason to fear the Russians in the future, that is I think the very reason why we should take a favourable opportunity to settle this burning question with them, at a time when the Emperor is certainly inclined for peace, when their finances are such as to make war difficult to them, and when the whole situation was, till very lately, wholly favourable to a settlement. True, they have recent cause for irritation; but I still hope that we may agree with them while we are in the way, and not postpone the matter till, at some much more inconvenient season, it may be forced on us. The case is very much as if our neighbour's house were extremely rotten and unsafe, and a constant source of danger to us, but, on account of a law-suit in the family, it had been impossible to get anything done. Now the offer is made to rebuild the house on fair terms; it would be madness to reject that offer, and to insist on shoring up the house for a little time longer.

If we do not want Russia to act alone—and that seems to be what we have most to fear—it is better that, if possible, we should act in concert with her. An Indian proverb, which has been before this quoted in political affairs, says that if you want to keep a wild elephant in order you must put him between two tame ones. Well, if Russia is a wild elephant, the sooner we can get her not only between two, but between five, tame ones so

much the better. It will be very hard if the five tame ones cannot keep her in order. We were made familiar with the process by the illustrations of the Prince's tour in India.

The only permanent and lasting settlement of the Turkish difficulty is to make a commencement of free government among the peoples of Turkey. We don't want to divide the country. Nobody at present does, I believe. We certainly don't want Egypt for our share—we have been forestalled in that by the bond-holders; it is too deeply pledged to them, and is worth nothing to anybody. We have just seen an ex-Cabinet Minister in Egypt making a settlement of that affair, which, if settlement it be, seems to be simply handing over the revenues of Egypt to the bond-holders to satisfy their claims.\*

It cannot, then, be too often repeated, that the only hope of a settlement is to treat Russia fairly, and not be unduly jealous of her. So far we cannot complain of anything that she has done. I think the Czar's present preparations for war are justified by the situation, for

\* I confess the whole affair seems to me very like a new deal with the old cards. But the Khedive gets a couple of millions more of borrowed money, several highly-respectable English gentlemen get places in Egypt, Egyptian bonds have risen, and every one is happy except the late Finance Minister. He, rascal if he be, was a native Egyptian, who stood in the way of the Khedive's little game and the bond-holders' 7 per cent. The villain has been summarily condemned, without trial and without defence, and his property appropriated.

without those preparations, and clear evidence that the Russians are prepared to act, the Turks would certainly not give in. The only road to a peaceful settlement appears to be to show them that they must yield, or force will assuredly be used against them. For the present, at least, the Russians will not seek to acquire Constantinople. We may settle the matter on a reasonable footing if we only act with them firmly and discreetly ; neither foolishly supporting the Turks in pursuance of a bygone policy, nor allowing ourselves to be put forward to bear the brunt of difficulties in which other Powers are really more interested than we are.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE REMEDY.

I ASSUME that it would be useless to discuss the impossible. Looking at the question from a practical point of view, we must keep within the limits of Lord Derby's proposals. And for my part I still think those proposals, liberally interpreted, are the best that could be made as things now stand. They are re-stated in their latest form in Lord Derby's despatch of Nov. 4. 'The independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire' is a phrase which cannot mean very much under the circumstances. Integrity in the sense of suzerainté? Yes. Independence in the sense of freedom from the tutelage of the European Powers in the whole of the Ottoman dominions? No. There may be independence and there may be integrity, but the integrity and independence can hardly be territorially coincident except in name.

However, phrases apart, and coming to practical measures, Lord Derby defines his proposals to be 'a system of local or administrative autonomy, by which is to be understood a system of local institutions which



shall give the population some control over their own local affairs, and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority;’ this he demands for Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria.

The reforms agreed on in the Note of Feb. 13 last are to be included in the administrative arrangements for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, so far as they may be applicable, for Bulgaria. These are—

Full and entire religious liberty—which I think the subjects of the Porte for the most part already have.

Abolition of the system of farming the taxes—a very necessary reform.

Amelioration of the agrarian position of the peasants who cultivate the soil—which the context shows to mean a settlement of the landlord and tenant question in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The establishment of a local commission, half Mussulman half non-Mussulman, to superintend the execution of the reforms—that may suffice for local purposes, but there must be some higher authority above all.

With the exception of the few points stated in the Note of Feb. 13, it will be seen that Lord Derby’s proposals have not got beyond the mere skeleton-stage; in fact, he rather lays down the principle that a system of local self-government is to be devised than propounds a plan; so there is much yet to be done, and no doubt much room for difference of opinion. All depends on

the sincere disposition of the Powers to co-operate in good faith to arrive at a settlement.

I must say I think it can only lead to evasion and misunderstanding if there is a pretence of maintaining the form of existing treaties when the substance must go. My view is, that the Ottoman Government has broken the public law of Europe and of the civilised world in its dealings with its subjects ; that it has only maintained its authority over them by barbarous methods and a wholesale slaughter and terrorism which cannot be tolerated—that it has thus put itself out of the pale of treaties. It has, in fact, only repressed and punished a revolt for which there was reasonable justification by these Oriental slaughterings, and by the use of a military force altogether disproportioned to its means, of which it has obtained the temporary use by borrowing great sums which it cannot repay. It must, then, be assumed that it is just and necessary to revise the treaty relations between the Porte and Europe, and to settle them on a new basis. The independence of the Porte must, in a great part of its dominions, be subjected to European control. So far as it retains power in these portions of its dominions it must do so only on giving guarantees—that is, consenting that some authority shall have a right to intervene, in order to see the reforms carried out, and to obviate the possibility of such events as have lately occurred.

Reverting to Lord Derby's proposals, the first prac-

tical difficulty (to which, I think, sufficient advertence has not been had) is this—what is Bulgaria? The word has been used without any explanation or definition. I have explained that the ‘Bulgaria’ written across our maps, as applied to the long strip of territory north of the Balkans, is a use of the term known neither to Turks nor to the Christians of Turkey; there is no such province in their nomenclature. That this is not the Bulgaria of recent discussions is practically quite settled by the circumstance that the Bulgarian country which was the scene of the late terrible events and the origin of these discussions is in no degree in the Bulgaria of our maps, but wholly south of the Balkans. It would be manifestly impossible to provide guarantees for a country where nothing specially important has recently occurred, and to leave out the country where interference has been necessitated by actual events. It is, then, clear that the Bulgaria to be dealt with must be the ethnological Bulgaria, and not the Bulgaria of the map-makers.

This, however, widens the question very much. I have shown that, in fact, Bulgaria is the body of European Turkey. If we deal with Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria, there remains of European Turkey only the Greek districts and Albania. Then immediately the question arises, is it possible to give a measure of local self-government to the Slav and quasi-Slav

districts, and to refuse it to Thessaly, Epirus, and the other districts in which the Greeks form the great majority of the populations? I think not.

If we include the Greeks we must face the fact that the territory to be dealt with is really European Turkey, less, perhaps, the Constantinople districts and some Mahommedan districts in the East. I leave apart, too, Mahommedan Albania, respecting which I have not now sufficient information to enable me to hazard an opinion. In truth, I believe that one argument of the Turks, and one only, is really sound. It is that used by them when they say: 'What you give to one you must give to all.' So far as regards European Turkey that means simply, what you give to the Slavs you must give to the Greeks. I dare say when it comes to yielding they will turn round and say: 'No, we didn't mean that. What you give you must confine to the country north of the Balkans.' But it cannot be. I think we must take the Turks at their word. No doubt the Greeks have risked nothing, and so far have earned nothing; but to leave them out would only be to involve the certainty of another difficulty. If they must fight and go through a course of bloodshed to get what the Slavs have got, they will do it. Better settle the matter once for all, or, at any rate, for some time to come.

I apprehend that Constantinople and the Bosphorus ~~must~~ remain with the Turks, for the present at least;

the Greek claim to that position cannot now be entertained. In fact, in some of the European districts near Constantinople and north of the Dardanelles the Mahommedans may be either so near a majority, or, at any rate, so large a minority that there would be no great difficulty in leaving them dominant there. The Greek Rayahs there have been so long accustomed to submission, and have so many opportunities of making the best of the situation in other ways, that they may remain as they are, till at least the relative number of the population is much changed by Greek increase and Turk decline. Possibly, on the other hand, Turks from Bulgaria may gravitate to the Constantinople Province, and make it more Turkish than it now is. It might not be a bad eventual arrangement if we could have a real and independent Turkey, consisting of Asiatic Turkey, *plus* the Constantinopolitan peninsula, and retaining, as now, the command of the Bosphorus. But let that pass.

In the north-eastern districts, where Tartars and other Mahommedans prevail, there is no reason why they should be subjected to Christian domination. Asia, I think, we had better let alone. Mr. Porter's letter to the *Times* on that subject seems to have attracted much attention, but I do not think the plea can be sustained. We must give and take. The Christian majority will probably have the best of it in the Christian provinces. In Asia the Turks are the majority, and the minority

must submit. The only possible case is that of the Armenians, and that I have already noticed (see pp. 6 and 80). As I have before said, all the islands are mainly Greek, and must be dealt with as the Greek Provinces in Europe.

It comes, then, in my view, to this, that Lord Derby's proposal must be applied to the greater part of Turkey in Europe. The measure of self-government to be given must be large and liberal. Under a general Turkish superiority the Christian races must be habituated to govern themselves, and as far as possible a common self-government for Christians and Mahomedans must be established. It is the fashion of many to say that the Bulgarians are wholly unfit for self-government. I do not believe it. They seem to me to be just the steady, sober sort of people (not too inflated or too highly educated) among whom self-government, beginning with the management of purely local affairs, may succeed the best. There is a great disposition on such occasions to cry out that people are not fit for self-government. I remember when very grave and high authorities used to say that a united and self-governing Italy was quite impossible; and more recently just the same thing was said of Roumania, where there is now a very good progressive and liberal State. Even the Servians have managed self-government very tolerably; and if the Greeks have not, it is because too many of them were clever and educated for the size of the country, and the constitution was neither localised nor

popular, but highly centralised and bureaucratic. Go about it in the right way—above all, localising the institutions as much as possible—and I do not doubt that the Bulgarians will succeed very well. I think their villages may very well be made more independent and self-governing than they now are, and that higher things may rapidly be attained.

The real difficulty is, not to teach the Christians to govern themselves, but to devise such a plan that they may do so without injustice to the Mahommedan population of the country. That is undoubtedly a real and serious difficulty, and requires very delicate handling. I think we ought not to allow the Mahomedans to be violently driven away. I hope that some day Christians and Mahomedans may learn to live and govern themselves together in amity and good-will. But, seeing the relative position of the races up to this time, and after what has of late so unfortunately happened, the circumstances are not favourable to such an arrangement. For a time it may be necessary to keep the two races apart, so far as local circumstances permit. Let them as far as may be govern their purely local affairs separately in their separate communities, and only bring them together gradually and in the higher stages of the administration. As it is, some competent force must guard the peace between them. The less they are brought into collision the less such interference will be necessary.

People who wish to keep things as they are are in the habit of saying: 'Oh, if you only let it alone, the Christians are rising, the Turks going down; the Christians will gradually get the upper hand, and the matter will settle itself!' The argument is the most plausible that I know on that side of the question, but it is fallacious nevertheless. The Turks see it as well as we do, and they are not such fools as quietly to submit to the process. On the contrary, as has already been shown, they have been taking the greatest precautions against it. Just in proportion as the Christians rise in one way the Turks keep them down in another, more and more disarming them and placing all real power in Mahommedan hands. The process could only be worked out in the end by very bitter civil war and much bloodshed.

The Turkish Government will not yield real self-government and any share of police and executive authority to the Christians without compulsion. There must be interference to effect that object. On the other hand, if power is given to the Christians without control, I am free to confess that there may be reason to fear that they might be a good deal less tolerant than the Turks, and that going beyond equality the Mahommedans might be in their turn oppressed. Quite as much, then, in the interest of these latter some supervision will be necessary. But, again I say, the less of this the better. By as complete a localisation as possible let each race



to the utmost that is possible manage their own affairs. Then I believe that, by a natural process, the Christians will go up and the Turks will go down, and the difficulty will gradually settle itself.

For several reasons, then, I think that in Turkey the utmost localisation is desirable. The races and creeds are so intermixed, that if we would for the present avoid collisions we must make the unit of self-government as small as possible—we must, in fact, begin with the village commune. That is the system to which all the existing facts and all experience point, and which is in every way the most politic and likely to succeed.

When we go beyond the separate villages in which one race or the other is predominant the only rule that can be laid down is, that the majority must prevail, the best securities possible being taken for the equitable treatment of the minority.

The essence of the whole scheme is, then, localisation, and that is just what the governing Turks, wise enough in their generation, seek to resist and evade. They know well enough that if they can avoid the smaller units of self-government in which the Christians would really govern themselves, and can confine the pretence of self-government to larger areas, in which they can count on a large representation of the Mahomedan element, and still more on the subserviency of Christians placed in high positions by themselves

(such people as the Patriarchs and others, who concoct the servile addresses to which allusion has been made), they may then, by a little clever management and political manipulation, retain power after all. Centralisation is the key to the policy of the bureaucracy. They want to begin from the top and say they will go down presently. My view is, that we must insist on beginning from the bottom with the villages, and working upwards. If small local government is established we may come to greater things, and perhaps to a Parliament for Turkey in the end, but not yet. Anything of the kind in the present state of things will be little better than a sham, even if the Old and Young Turks can themselves agree about it.

In this respect we may take warning from Greece, where a much more energetic and clever race than the Turks tried the same plan that the Constantinople people put forward. The clever people of Athens thought they might treat the rural Greeks, who had really fought for independence, as boors unfit to govern themselves. They gave them no real substantial local government—all offices and all patronage down to that of the village were practically retained in the hands of the central Government. Hence all the difficulties of Greece. To show the spirit in which Greek affairs were arranged I will quote but one article of the Constitution: ‘11. Higher education is to be provided by the State. The State will assist the parish schools.’

So the upper classes were to get their education wholly at the expense of the taxpayer, the lower classes were only to be assisted. That is curiously like the system which the upper classes in Bengal sought to obtain, and which I rectified.

It is, I may say in passing, one of the difficulties of the Greek question that the leading Greeks to this day do not at all care for local government. They don't want to see local government established in Thessaly, Epirus, or other parts of Turkey ; they had rather wait till the Greek districts can be directly annexed to Athens or to a Greek Constantinople.

When we go beyond the smallest unit of local government I apprehend that the main question between England and Russia will be, is the system in the European Provinces to follow more nearly the model of Crete or that of the Lebanon ? That question will about cover the whole of the debatable ground. I rather think that Lord Derby has inclined to the Cretan model, while the Russians put forward that of the Lebanon. I have briefly stated the salient points of each system (see *ante*, pp. 95-8).

Now, before we go farther I would put the case in this way. There are some things we may think but not openly say, and so, to deal with the matter confidentially, what is the ultimate object to be aimed at ? Do we really expect to maintain the substantial power and government of the Turks in the Christian Provinces,

or do we accept the view that the Christians must be prepared for a more complete autonomy which must come sooner or later? To be candid, I think it must be confessed that the former course is really in practice impossible. I grant, if that were what we look to, the Cretan model is the most appropriate. You can then only give the Christians so much protection as is consistent with the permanent rule of a dominant minority. You may insist on the selection of governors as good as can be found among Turks. You may obtain for the Christians some abatement for a time of the grosser forms of oppression, and some relief from taxation (though this latter is hardly compatible with the Ottoman finances); but still you must allow the Ottoman Government to dominate by an alien police and soldiery, to cover the country with forts and blockhouses, to keep the Christians in complete subjection. Such a course, in my opinion, is not to be thought of. The Turkish race and the Turkish Government are effete; they never can establish a satisfactory rule in Europe. You must loosen, not tighten, the bonds of the subject peoples. You must prepare them for freedom. Any other course would only lead to renewed troubles. If I am right, the Lebanon system, rather than that of Crete, may furnish a model in some respects. But I reserve the question of foreign occupation for discussion presently.

My assumption, then, is that the local government

will commence by an improved and organised system of village government, under which the villages will be allowed *bonâ fide* to choose their own headmen and to regulate their village affairs. Whenever the village is of one race, or one race so distinctly predominates that it may be considered to belong to that race, this part of the settlement will, I think, present no difficulties that may not be overcome by care and patience. My impression is, that it will be found that such an arrangement will provide for by far the greater part of the rural villages—the Christian villages (properly so called) being purely Christian, and most of the Turkish villages being so far Turkish that the Christians are only servants, subordinates, and tradesmen. There will remain some mixed villages, a considerable proportion of the small towns, usually called villages, and most of the large towns, in which it will be necessary to try the experiment of a local government common to both creeds. It is likely that under the rule of majorities a good many of these may more and more tend to become denominational (if I may so express it); and in the remainder, difficult though it may be at first, I hope that eventually the races will learn to unite together. In the large towns I believe they may very well do so.

The next local division above the village or town will be the Caza, or canton. In some parts of the country denominational groups may be easily enough arranged; in others it will be more difficult. I should

incline to try to form such groups as much as possible, even if strict geographical considerations are not exactly followed. Thus, a village might be annexed to the nearest canton of its own faith, even if the plan involved some geographical intermixture of different cantons. Such an arrangement is inconvenient but not impossible; it is very frequently met with in India among the petty native States; and even in this country, I believe, detached bits of counties and parishes are still to be met with here and ther.

When we go on to the larger divisions, the district and the province, they will not be found to belong wholly to any single denomination—hardly in the case of districts, never in the case of provinces. But here we can only fall back on the rule of majorities, with protection of minorities. No doubt, in most of the Bulgarian country and in a good deal of the Greek country the Christians must prevail, and the Mahomedans will find themselves in a minority, and so far in an inferior position. This cannot be avoided. Minorities must in some things yield to majorities everywhere; but the supervising authority, which I assume must be established for a time at least, would see justice done in essentials. We may take the Lebanon as a hopeful example to induce us to believe that with good management a *modus vivendi* may be found, and the different creeds may learn to go on happily together.

I would have it that there should be a village or

communal council in each village and town, and a cantonal council for each canton. But it would be, I think, desirable to retrench something of the excessive complication and endless gradation of councils set forth on paper in the present constitutions. The district councils might be omitted, and one chance of collision between Christians and Mahommedans so avoided. It might suffice that the appointment of district governors should be approved by the European Commission ; and then above them I would have a provincial government for each great province, consisting of a Governor-General and a fairly elected council, the nucleus of a future State assembly.

Though I would not drive away the Turks from the Christian districts, I think it would be well to give every facility for the migration of people of any class who wish to move from a village or canton in which they are in a minority to one in which their fellows prevail. Land is abundant in European Turkey, still more in Asia, and arrangements might be made to enable those who wish to move to do so with as little loss and inconvenience as may be possible, compensation being given for anything left behind which cannot be sold. I hope that if the option is given people will generally stay in their old homes ; but it might be a relief to their minds, a sort of safety-valve, if they know that they can go if they wish

A newly-arranged Province of Bulgaria would pro-

bably extend from the line of the Danube (running from Widdin nearly as far east as Silistria) to the Maritza, about half-way between Adrianople and Philipopolis, and thence to near the mouth of the Salonica river; and again from the Black Sea, at Burgas, to the Albanian frontier. Epirus and Thessaly, with something north of Thessaly, the peninsula east of Salonica, and the coast districts of Macedonia and Thrace to near Dedeasch, would be Greek districts; and the country from Constantinople to and about Adrianople and the lower Maritza would be treated as Turkish, the large Greek element in this latter tract notwithstanding. North of Varna would be the Tartar and some Turkish districts. Under an arrangement of this kind it would be desirable to give the Bulgarians outlets to the sea at Salonica and Burgas. At those places inlets of the sea run up to near the confines of the Bulgarian country, and the Bulgarian outlets need not interfere with the possession of the coast districts by the Greeks, Turks, and Tartars respectively.

Bosnia and Herzegovina must be separately treated. The agrarian question must be first dealt with there; and that makes a settlement more difficult, as I have already said. In fact, the antagonism of classes is so great there that it may be doubtful whether it would be possible to settle the matter and establish a form of government likely to last without a foreign occupation. But fortunately there will be less difficulty



about that occupation in Bosnia than elsewhere, for it is a province almost wholly isolated from the rest of Turkey, and which, as it happens, no one covets. So that the occupation would not be attended with risk of ultimate complications.

My own opinion is that, to settle the agrarian question, much more radical measures must be adopted than any that have yet been proposed. In Russia and Prussia, and, I believe, all the countries of the Continent where agrarian questions of a similar character have been settled, a share of the land has been given to the emancipated serfs. In Bosnia it has only been proposed to give them opportunities of purchasing waste land. That seems an insufficient proposal, and at any rate would much depend upon the way it was dealt with. There is, no doubt, plenty of land; but it generally happens that landlords in the position of the Bosnian landlords claim the uncultivated land as well as that which is cultivated. If such claims to large tracts of uncultivated land are admitted, it would never suffice to offer the peasant population merely particular lands which belong to the State, probably the worst; but, if the landlords can be restricted to the lands now cultivated, possibly much may be done by allowing the peasants to migrate to new lands. This is, however, a matter of detail, which competent men must look into. There are plenty of men on the Continent who thoroughly understand these subjects.

Going back to the treatment of the Christian Provinces generally, we come to the mode of filling up the official ranks, the military and police and civil service of the Government. A great deal has been made of the exclusion of Christians from the army; and some people—of such a class that a conscription is not likely to affect themselves—have been very loud in demanding that Christians should be admitted to the army. I confess I am inclined to think that a concession of that kind under present conditions would be anything but a boon to the Christians. We cannot expect that the Turks would willingly put them in such a position as to endanger the safety of the Turkish Government. If they are conscripted into the army it must be that the attempt will be made to lick them into soldiers of the Turk—they will have to serve under Turkish officers, they will be miserably paid, and altogether the service will be a burden and a hardship to them. If the suzerainty of the Sultan is to be maintained, I think it is better that he should be allowed to keep his own army. Any other course would be merely a preparation for ultimate civil war, which neither can we expect that the Turks would accept, nor would it be desirable that we should promote.

It is very different when we come to the police force, that force which is much more intimately connected with the every-day lives and fortunes of the

people. It must be absolutely insisted that the local police should be a native police, that the Christians should have a share of it in full proportion to their numbers. A question has been raised whether there should be an armed police or a militia. That must be settled afterwards. I have, throughout, expressed the view that most of the people, if decently governed, are so quiet and tractable that no great force of armed police would be required to maintain order. If an army keeps garrison in the most important places, a local police, armed and equipped in a very moderate way, will probably quite suffice for the rest.

As regards the civil officials, it will not be enough to require that they should be Christians. The Porte could readily find Christians who would be their own creatures, and little improvement upon the Turkish rulers. The higher officials must, no doubt, be nominated; but I think that, as in the Lebanon, the sanction of the Powers, or some representative of the Powers, must be required, and that some term of office must be defined. The lower and more local officials may well be elected under a free system of election duly supervised and carried out in good faith.

But supposing that an agreement has been come to upon the form of local administration, then comes the more delicate and difficult question of the guarantees. We must not only have some power to superintend the

reform of the administration, but we must have a force which is capable of protecting those who are thus engaged, and of suppressing any attempt to break the peace by armed force or any serious collision of races. I think that if the Porte accepts the European guarantee, the Powers must do their part by a highly-placed European Commission, such as Lord Stratford recommends, charged to superintend the administration of the provinces to which concessions are made. Mere local Commissions would not suffice, nor would it do to have only what is called a Consular Commission, if that means a commission of interference such as is exercised by the present Consuls. In truth that interference of the Consuls, necessary though it may now be, very much complicates and aggravates the other difficulties under which Turkey suffers. We have to go no farther than Pera—the European quarter of Constantinople—to gain a lively impression of the inconvenience of Consular jurisdiction. The state of that place is worse than Stamboul proper, because there are so many jurisdictions, and no one authority can do anything. I think that in the provinces one of the chief advantages of improved administration, supervised by a European Commission, would be that we might get rid of those Consular jurisdictions, and subject everyone to the same law. Local Commissions, then, you may have for particular provinces, but over all there must be a high-placed European Commission.

There remains the question, who is to protect the Commission? My own idea is that, if the Porte should honestly and frankly accept the arrangements agreed upon by the European Powers, it might be possible to entrust to the Turkish army the task of protecting the Commission, and preventing any very serious breaches of the peace. I ground this view on the extremely good character which is given to the Turkish soldiers by all who have had to do with them. I believe that they are as amenable to discipline and altogether as well-ordered as any soldiers in the world, if they are only fairly treated and fairly commanded. If an arrangement of this kind might be possible, it would gratify the Turks, would make the concessions required infinitely easier to them, and would at the same time utilise the best portions of the Turkish army. No doubt, it would be necessary that the European Powers should have a large voice in the choice of the officers to command the troops in the districts where the new system of civil government is to be applied. Those troops must ordinarily be confined to certain points, and must not be brought into immediate contact with the people in the administration of their civil affairs; they must be reserved for serious necessities, in case such necessities should arise. But my hope and belief is that they would not arise; that under the civil authorities a tolerably strong and fairly armed police would be quite sufficient to keep

order, so long as the administration is conducted as we may expect that it would be conducted under the superintendence of a European Commission. This only would be essentially necessary, that the Turkish army itself should be well paid and contented. It would be for the advantage of all parties that the excessive armaments of the Porte should be very greatly reduced. The numbers of the army need no longer be very large; and, indeed, now that the Porte must cease to borrow (we may hope that no one will lend it money), the reduction of the army is a necessity. We might well insist that the army should be only so large as the real revenue of the country can fairly support when fairly paid and fairly treated. Such a moderate army would be no danger to any neighbouring Power. On the contrary, under reliable officers it might even be a source of strength and security. It might garrison Bulgaria and the Greek districts, and the Commissioners might then superintend the civil administration in sufficient safety.

To be candid, again, my idea would be that a system of local government short of complete autonomy being now granted and administered under supervision, with the protection of the Turkish troops, the people would more and more learn to govern themselves; and eventually that state of things might be approached which existed in Servia when the Turks only main-

tained garrisons in the principal fortresses, and the people fully administered their own affairs.

These, then, being, in rough form, the suggestions which have occurred to me, I now compare them with the proposals which have been published as the Russian proposals, and discussed as genuine. I take them as they appear in the public prints. I leave for separate discussion the question of the disarmament and the removal of the Circassians from Europe.

The election of all officers by the parishes, none but natives being eligible. That seems a very reasonable proposal, and is very much what I have already suggested.

The appointment of Christian governors by the Porte for the three provinces to officiate for five or six years. That is also very much what I have suggested, except that I have not said that the governors must necessarily be Christians. In practice, however, I think that in the Christian Provinces they ought to be so.

The abolition of the practice of farming out the taxes, and the replacement of tithes by pecuniary imposts fixed with the concurrence of the ratepayer. That is an administrative improvement upon which all are agreed.

The use in the Courts of the language spoken in the various provinces. That is clearly reasonable, and must be conceded.

The convening of an assembly of notables to advise the Conference on the administrative reforms to be introduced ; that is a more doubtful proposition, and does not seem, after all, very important. The Conference must settle the essential points first. It would not be possible to prolong it while an assembly of notables was being consulted. But if, as suggested, there should result a European Commission to superintend the reforms, they may very well work out the details with the assistance of an assembly of notables.

The formation of a militia and police, to consist of Christians and Mussulmans in proportion to the numerical strength of each denomination. I have said that I hardly think anything amounting to a militia necessary, and that a fairly armed police would be adequate. But, after all, on the Continent they hardly draw a visible line between militia and police, and this may be left as matter of detail.

The disbanding of the irregular troops. That goes of itself. I believe the irregular troops were only enlisted for the war, and there will be no difficulty about disbanding them.

The concentration of the Turkish troops in certain towns to be fixed in advance. That is the proposal which I see with the greatest pleasure of all ; for if the statement of the Russian terms is genuine, as I trust it is, this proposal seems to amount to an acceptance of the view that the Turkish soldiers, restricted to certain



garrisons, may continue to occupy the Bulgarian country, and that a foreign occupation is not necessary. That would relieve us of an immense difficulty; for in the prospect of a Russian occupation of Bulgaria would lie, no doubt, the crucial point of the whole negotiations, whether as regards the consent of the Turks, or the jealousies and suspicions which might be excited in Europe. If that can be avoided by an arrangement of the kind now under discussion, I should sanguinely hope and expect that a settlement might be come to.

The institution of Consular Commissions to superintend the carrying out of the above reforms. I have already said that I think any extension of the present Consular system would be decidedly objectionable, and that on the contrary it ought to be abolished. But I should apprehend that by the expression 'Consular Commission' is rather intended such a European Commission as that which has been already proposed—something of the kind there certainly must be.

The punishment of all persons concerned in the late horrors, and the indemnification of the families who have suffered. On this point I somewhat incline to mitigate the demands which have been made, and my opinion flows from the view which I have taken of the whole of these transactions. That view, it will be seen, is this: that the atrocities were not so much the work of individuals and for which individuals can be made responsible, as the result of the system of government

prevailing in Turkey, and the determination of the Turkish rulers to stamp out the Bulgarian insurrection by the most extreme severity. For this purpose I think that the Mahommedan population, the police, the Bashi-Bazouks, and the troops were encouraged and led on by official authority to attack and destroy the Christian villages; and in regard to the excesses which attended that destruction, it would be difficult to the last degree properly to apportion the individual blame. Some individuals may and ought to be punished, no doubt, if acts of very special atrocity can be brought home to them. But to require that for crimes which must in the main be laid at the door of the Turkish Government, individuals should be made responsible and punished, is a proceeding which would probably be attended with a good deal of injustice, and very great irritation among the Mahommedan population. I think we must rather consider that the Turkish Government and people are to be punished for these atrocities by the measures which the Powers are, I hope, about to force upon them—by that loss of independence, and that submission to a reformed administration, which will be the sequence of the events which have taken place. I should much prefer that view of the case, to pushing too far the punishment of the persons concerned. To punish them without clear proof of individual guilt, on the system on which the Chinese produce and punish criminals, when they are hard pressed, would be a mis-

take, and the attempt really to sift the extent of individual guilt must be accompanied by much recrimination and great difficulty. I should be inclined to limit to extreme cases the punishment of individuals.

A fair indemnification to the families who have suffered should be insisted upon, care being taken that the demands made are not extravagant.

There remains the disarmament and the deportation of the Circassians which I have reserved. Now the subject of disarmament is one on which I have much experience, and from experience I speak. It is a very delicate and difficult operation, and great care must be taken not to plunge into a disarmament without exactly understanding what we mean by disarmament. There are two kinds of disarmament; one is merely to prohibit the public carrying arms; that is comparatively a small matter; the other is to prohibit and prevent the possession of arms; and it is only this latter that can really be called disarmament. Now to attempt a disarmament of that kind is, as I know very well, an extremely serious affair. I have seen it done—I have seen it more or less successfully done—and I have seen it unsuccessfully tried; but of this I am sure, that a real disarmament—the taking away of the arms of a people—can never be well and effectually carried out except by methods of extreme severity, and by a very strong power treating the country to be disarmed as a conquered country. Even so treating it, we must act in a specially thorough

and severe manner; a nominal, partial, or incomplete disarmament is no use at all, but much worse than useless. So long as we flinch from the extreme of thoroughness and severity, what happens is this—that in proportion as we press the matter, the good, the peaceable, the well-behaved, the timid among the population give up their arms; but the bad, ill-disposed, and seditious people conceal and keep them. Nothing can be worse than that. These partial disarmaments leave the best of the population at the mercy of the worst. If we are to disarm at all, in the sense in which I now use the term, we must have a house-to-house visitation and search for arms, and get them out, if it be possible to do so. Evidently such a process in Turkey must be attended with the most extreme irritation to the Mahomedan population, and could only be carried out by a very strong foreign force acting in a very high-handed way. Such a process is very much to be deprecated. For myself I trust that in the present condition of things it will not be attempted. It may seem scarcely consistent with a peaceable state of things; but I say advisedly that I would rather that both sides should remain armed to some degree than that a disarmament of this character should be attempted. In my view, such severe measures are not really necessary. All that I have said of the population shows that the result of my inquiries has been to satisfy me that they are not so very bad after all—not so disorderly and difficult to

manage that extreme measures are required. I believe that under a well-regulated Government they would be as orderly as most other populations; and therefore it is that I do not see the necessity for a very harsh disarmament. What is required is that there should be an equality between Mahommedans and Christians; and in that view I would rather fall back upon the minor form of disarmament, if disarmament it can be called. I would prohibit the carrying of arms, and would put reasonable restriction on the sale of arms and ammunition. For the rest, the use of arms being thus discouraged, I would not attempt domiciliary inquiries into the possession of arms, except in the case of villages, tribes, or individuals who have so misconducted themselves that a severe disarmament should be decreed against them as a penal measure. In that case, the measure should be carried out thoroughly and effectually; but I would confine it to those special cases.

Then, as respects the deportation of the Circassians, there can be no question that an order of this kind would be very hard upon the Circassians. They have had a hard time of it in Circassia, and a hard time of it in Turkey; and it would be very desirable to avoid the forcible deportation of them again, if it can be possibly helped. Perhaps, too, there is a trace of an old grudge against them in the Russian demand on this subject. Certainly they have been exceedingly troublesome, and under a bad government, or a government which is

not a strong and a firm government, they would be very troublesome again. But I believe that, under a strong and good government, they might be utilised. If Turkey were an English possession, I think it likely the Circassians might be special favourites, and would be largely employed in our Irregular Cavalry, and in other ways. They are, I gather, perhaps more European than Asiatic. I think we must have got the pattern of smart great-coats from them.

Upon the whole, I think it might be better to avoid a general decision on this Circassian question, but to treat each Circassian village according to its own deserts. In cases where they have behaved particularly ill, and made themselves specially obnoxious to their neighbours, I would insist upon their deportation, carrying out the measure with as much indulgence towards them as may be possible. Where their conduct has been so little intolerable that there may be hope that they will subside into good and useful subjects, I would give them a fair chance, treat them liberally as to land, employ them so far as may be, and try to reform them.

I do not know that I have any further suggestions to make in dealing thus briefly with this great subject. To go further into details would involve particulars and discussions hardly suited to a rapid little publication such as I now propose to put forth. I will only again say this, that, whatever plan may be settled, the Powers

must most thoroughly agree upon it, and must resolutely determine to enforce it with unanimous voice and combined force if need be. When the demands to be made have been so far settled, there must be an end to parley and negotiations. It must be put to the Turks: 'Submit, or you will have to fight.' My impression is that the Old Turks would certainly yield, and that the only doubt is whether Young Turkey would do so or would chance it in the hope of a division of the Powers. And here comes in what has been called the 'massacre argument,' of which a great deal has been made, and which is said not to have been without its effect upon the mind of Sir Henry Elliot. It is asserted that if the Turks find they are being driven to the wall—or, to put it less figuratively, driven out of Europe—they will turn again and will kill all the Christians before they go. It is not only the fear of a rising and a massacre in Constantinople, which led to a great panic there a few months ago—probably people are now convinced that the nearness of the European Fleets protects them from that danger. It is also said: 'You want to interfere on behalf of the Bulgarians; to protect them you are carrying your policy to the point that will drive the Turks to despair; they will yield a good deal, but their independence and their empire they will never surrender without fighting. If the worst comes to the worst, if the Russians are about to cross the Danube, they will turn and massacre all the Bulgarians; so that

at all events the Bulgarians will not be benefited, for there will be no Bulgarians left to protect ! The Turks may go, but, going, will leave a desert, and that will be your work.' I believe that this argument is of European concoction, and that, so far as the Turks use it, they have got it from the European papers. But they are ready enough to take up anything of that kind, and they now use it quietly and confidentially, and are very ready to say: 'Oh, it would be a dreadful thing! we hope it never will be so, but you know our population are very fanatical and extremely desperate—if you push them too far it is not in our power to restrain them, and we cannot guarantee that they will not commit such terrible massacres of the Christians that the petty affairs of which you complain would be a mere flea-bite.' And then philo-Turk Ministers look grave, and think it would be terrible indeed, and that they must at all events try to avoid pushing things to that extremity. I do not believe a word of it. The massacre argument is a very good bugbear to protect the Turks from coercion, and to try to stave off the inevitable concessions. But, after all, Turks are very much like other people; the proportion of those who would sacrifice themselves in order to do very desperate deeds of savage and useless vengeance would not be much larger than among other populations. If they heard that the Russians were coming across the Danube, they might prepare to fight the Russians, and fight them pluckily and well; but



they would not make their own fate certain by turning round and trying to kill their inoffensive Bulgarian neighbours. The late massacres in Bulgaria I believe to have been not an unprovoked and unaided popular movement, but a bloody repression of a small rebellion, incited and directed by the official pashas. I think we ought not to be, and I trust we shall not be, frightened by a scarecrow, but do the right, come what may.

There remains the question, what is to be done if the Porte finally refuses to accept the terms of the Powers? I fear in that case nothing remains but to let the Russians take upon themselves the task of coercion. One only alternative there seems to be, and that is the course suggested by the Emperor of Russia himself, in September or the beginning of October, namely: 'If you object to our occupying Bulgaria, and think a naval demonstration of the Powers sufficient, try it.' If the Russians were still willing to agree to that course it might be possible. The Turks have lately been making great exertions to arm the Dardanelles thoroughly with heavy batteries of the best modern guns. I do not know whether the fleets really could go to Constantinople so easily as they might a few weeks ago. Naval and artillery officers must look to that. We must take good care we do not miscalculate in trying to do that by a naval *coup-de-main*, which cannot be done safely without some land force. But with or without a land force, no doubt, if the Powers were deter-

mined to come through the Dardanelles, they would, and it might be possible to bring the Turks to terms by taking the fleets up to Constantinople to coerce them there. It may be asked again: 'What are the fleets to do when they get to Constantinople?' If the Turks still refuse, and say 'Do your worst,' we might look rather foolish; we should not like to bombard and destroy the city as a means of enforcing diplomatic action. However, I daresay something might be done. We might, for instance, insist upon the surrender of the whole ironclad fleet as a material guarantee, or take it if it were not surrendered. The heart of the governing bureaucracy of Turkey is so completely in Constantinople, the governing pashas are so little fitted to leave the capital and undertake a patriotic war in the provinces, that in reality they would probably yield to a hostile fleet arriving at Seraglio Point—supposing, of course, that the force was strong enough to preclude all hope of opposition upon the Bosphorus. After all, there may be something in the British sailor's remark which appears in 'Punch': 'Why can't we take Constantinople, and settle the matter?'

ALBEMARLE STREET ;

December 1876.

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